

P R A Y E R S

F O R

S U N D A Y S,

H O L Y - D A Y S,

A N D O T H E R

F E S T I V A L S,

F R O M

The First Sunday of A D V E N T,
to *Whitsuntide*. (*Lent excepted*.)

T O M E I.

Faithfully Corrected.

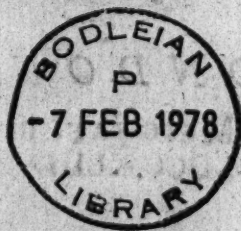
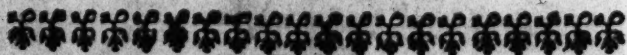


L O N D O N :

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THE Pious Reader is desir'd to observe, That these Prayers, according to the Method of the Church Offices, may serve for every Day in the Week, in this manner: The Prayers for *Sunday* are to be repeated on those Days of the Week, on which there is no Memorial of any Saint. And for those Days of the Week, on which is Commemorated any Saint, the Prayers are here provided, either *Proper* to the Festival, or else to be taken out of the *Common*, as set down at the End. And thus is there a Provision for every Day.



Gr
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PRAYERS

FOR

SUNDAYS,

HOLY-DAYS, &c.

First Sunday in ADVENT.

Gospel, LUKE xxi. 25, 33.



HIS being a holy Time appointed by the Church as a Preparation for the great Solemnity of God's Mercy in the Birth of our Redemer; let us now beg

Grace of the divine Bounty that we may well employ this Time, according to the Design of the Church, and thus hope to partake of the divine Mercies.

A 2

Let

Let us pray.

O G O D, who hast wrought so many Mercies for us, and knowing that through our great Unworthiness we are in danger of losing the Benefit of them, hast therefore appointed Times wherein we may look into the State of our Souls, and remove all that which may be an Obstacle to thy Grace: Grant we may make a right Use of this Favour, and so employ this *Advent*, as to prepare our Souls for meeting our Redeemer.

Grant, O Lord, we may truly consider the Greatness of this Favour, inasmuch as all the Works of thy Mercy must be lost to us, if we are not prepared to receive them. Hence may we turn all our Thoughts to examine what Indispositions there are in us; and since these can be nothing but either Sin, or the Effects of Sin, hence again let us resolve upon making it the Business of this Time to Search into our Sins, and into all those our Ways, which are the Ways of Corruption.

And not only search into them, but likewise enter upon such Means as may be necessary to overcome them, and by the serious Endeavours of a sincere Repentance, seek to obtain the Favour of thy Peace.

O God

First Sunday in Advent. 5

O God, how happy a Time would this be to us, should we thus employ it in preparing our Souls for thy Mercy! How might the Fruit of a few Days Recollection be the Comfort of Eternity! How might we Bless thee for ever for the Grace of this Time! Grant us therefore, O Lord, this Grace, that we may no more lose this Opportunity, as we have too often already done, but carefully improve it to thy Glory, and the Benefit of our Souls.
Amen.

That we may be truly serious in now seeking for Mercy, the Church lays before us this Day the Terror of God's Justice in the last and general Judgment, that being excited by Fear, we may make a seasonable Provisions against it. Let us beg Grace to make this good Use of what is proposed.

Let us pray.

O G O D, who proposest the Severity of thy Judgments to us, that by the Sight of thy Justice, we may be more earnest in laying hold of thy Mercy: Grant, we beseech thee, we may make this good Use of the Terrors laid before us this Day, and thus wisely, according to the Designs of thy Goodness, turn thy Justice into Mercy.

A 3

Grant

6 *First Sunday in Advent.*

Grant we may truly apprehend the Terrors of the last Day, when Christ shall come in Majesty to judge the World.

When the Earth, with all its glorious Vanities having been consumed by Fire.

All Mankind from the Beginning of the World shall be summon'd by the last Trumpet to take up their Bodies and appear before their Judge.

When all shall be obliged to give an Account of the Sins of their whole Life.

When the Thoughts of all shall be Reveal'd, and all that Wickedness, which had Darknes to cover it, shall be brought to light.

When the secret Contrivances of Hypocrisy and Envy, of Malice and Revenge, of Pride and Sensuality, with all their hidden Circumstances, shall be discover'd in the Face of the whole World.

When Sinners shall see all the Crimes of their whole Lives at once laid before them, without any possibility of Colour or Excuse.

When they shall see themselves without Friends, or any hopes of Favour, but certainly to be judg'd according as they have done, whether Good or Evil.

When they shall see their Judge before them exasperated by their Crimes, and tho' Infinite in Mercy, yet see no Mercies

First Sunday in Advent. 7

cies in him but what they have despised.

When they shall see Eternity before them, and that whatever is their Doom, 'tis to be their Doom for ever, without a Possibility of Redress.

When they shall see Hell open ready to receive them, and the Ministers of God's Justice waiting only for his Word to seize and cast them Headlong into Unquenchable Flames,

Without any Respect to State, Sex, Age or Condition; but Rich and Poor, Magistrate and Subject, all alike to become the Prey of Devils, and receive the just Recompence of their Iniquities.

When the Judge shall separate them from the Righteous, and pronounce with Power and Majesty that last and terrible Sentence, *Go ye Cursed into Eternal Fire, which has been prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

When all those Unhappy Wretches shall see too late the Errors of their Ways.

When they shall see their Folly in having neglected the Time that was given them to prepare for Eternity.

That for the Shadows and Dreams of a few Moments, they have brought themselves into this State of Despair.

That for courting a corruptible Body and a deceitful World, they have

purchased to themselves everlasting Torments.

That for pleasing themselves a few Years, they have provoked the Wrath of God against them, and shall never more have the Hopes of Mercy.

But when a Thousand and Ten Thousand Millions of Years are over, they shall see no Possibility of Relief, but shall even then, as it were, begin their Misery afresh.

This is to be the wretched State of those Unhappy Sinners, who neglecting the Time of Mercy, shall at the last Day fall under the Anger of their Judge.

Grant, O God, we beseech thee, we may have a true Apprehension of these last Terrors, and that the Memory of thy Judgments may be always so present before us, that the Foresight may be a Means of never having any Experience of them.

Confirm us, O Blessed Lord, so far in the Remembrance of them, that we may have always a Fear of thy Judgment; that this may make us watchful over all our Ways, and resolute in standing against all the Sollicitations to Sin.

Let us be arm'd with this Thought whenever the Devil invites us to Evil, and let this be one Motive of never consenting to Sin, that we are not able to dwell with everlasting Flames.

Let

First Sunday in Advent.

9

Let this prepare us against all the Snares of wicked Company and the World, that there is nothing so charming in them, for the sake of which one would chuse to be the Companion of Devils.

Let us with this give an Answer to all the Difficulties of a virtuous Life, that it is much easier bearing present Self-denials, than to be set on the left Hand of the Judge, and hear that dreadful Sentence, *Go you Cursed into Eternal Fire.*

Let us with this make our Defence against all the Troubles of this Life, that they are to be esteem'd as valuable by Christians, if with them we can make an Interest with our Judge, and if by being patient under them, we can remove or moderate that Wrath which is due to our Sins. Since therefore God has inform'd us, that Tribulation is the Way to Glory, and that by it Souls are purify'd, like Gold in the Fire, against that Day when Christ shall be manifested: Hence let us offer our selves to all Tribulations, esteeming all as welcome; which may be a Means of procuring Peace against the last Day, and delivering us from the Anger of our Judge.

Wherefore, O God, behold, in Consideration of that last Day, we here offer our selves to whatever Portion thou shalt please to ordain for us of Troubles in this Life: Here cut, here burn, here afflict us as thou wilt,

10 *First Sunday in Advent.*

wilt, so thou spare us hereafter at the last Appearance.

Upon the same Consideration, we now judge that no Sort of Penitential Life is to be esteem'd difficult, so it may be a Means of punishing Sin, and finding Mercy with our Judge. Wherefore, O God, behold we now implore thy Grace, that we may no longer go on in the Ways of Sin, but embrace such a Method, as may be most proper for humbling the Sinner, and lessening the Terror of those Judgments which are due to our Sins.

Teach us to have a Horror of sacrificing Eternity to the vain Follies of a few Moments; and may it now be our Study how to manage a few Moments so, that they may be serviceable for securing our eternal Peace.

May we now chuse to renounce the pleasing Invitations of this World, and enter into such Discipline as may oblige Nature to mourn at present, in Hopes of that future Joy which is promised.

Happy Mortifications, happy Self-denials, which procure Mercy from our God! And wretched those Satisfactions which treasure up his Wrath against us! Rescue us therefore, O God, from all these unhappy Snares; and may thy Grace put us this Day in such a Method, by which the last Judgment may not be our Terror, but our Joy.

May

First Sunday in Advent. 11

May we now call over the Account of all our whole Lives, setting some Day apart for this Purpose : May we now accuse, judge, and condemn our selves, and be willing now to suffer the Punishment due to our Sins. Now may we judge our selves, that we may not be judged ; now may we punish our selves, because Justice commands it ; and now, O Jesus, may we labour to engage thy Mercy to us, laying hold of the Mediation of thy sacred Blood, which now thou offerest to Sinners, that being solicitous to forsake the World, and live by the Gospel, we may not be judg'd with the World, but find Mercy with thee.

Now we have Time for doing it ; if those Wretches, who are already condemn'd to Hell, had the same Opportunity as we have, how would they make Use of it ? And if we do not make Use of it, may not this Neglect be the Loss of all, and put us into the same State of Despair with them ? 'Tis thy miraculous Grace only, O Lord, which can prevent it.

Let

122 *For every Day in Advent.*

Let us pray.

RAISE up, O Lord, we beseech thee, thy Power, and come, that by thy Protection we may be freed from the imminent Dangers of our Sins, and by thy Mercy be saved; who livest and reignest with the Father, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost, &c.

For every Day in Advent.

MOST Gracious Lord, by whose Direction this Time is appointed, for renewing the Memory of thy infinite Mercy to Man in the Incarnation of thy only Son; Grant we may live this holy Time in the Spirit of Thanksgiving, and every Day raise up our Hearts to thee in the grateful Acknowledgment of what thou hast done for us.

Help us, O God, in this Duty, and suffer us not to live on dull, senseless and unthinking, when we have so great an Act of thy Mercy before us: Suffer not our Thoughts to be wholly consum'd upon worldly Business, or carried away with Impertinences and Follies, when we have the Wonders of thy Goodness calling up-
on

For every Day in Advent. 13

on us to adore, praise, and give Glory to thy Name.

O God, this would be a great Ingratitude, and too plainly discover the Unhappiness of our inward State, in not being touch'd with the Sense either of our own Misery through Sin, or of thy Deliverance in the Redemption wrought by Jesus Christ. Deliver us therefore, we beseech thee, from this Reproach, and now vouchsafe us thy Grace, that, as often as we approach before thy holy Altar, or are present at thy sacred Mysteries, we may call to Mind thy Mercies, and give Thanks for them, and never fail one Day of this holy Time, to prostrate before thee, and on our Knees to offer up some Prayers in Acknowledgment of thy Goodness to lost Man, and of thy only Son humbling himself, in becoming Man for our Salvation. And this, O God, may we do, not only in Words, but from our Hearts, and by endeavouring that the Consideration of thy Blessings may be every Day the Increase of our Love towards so merciful a Benefactor.

Besides this, we ask thy Grace, O God, that we may make a due Use of this holy Time, for preparing our Souls to receive Christ our Lord coming into the World at the approaching Solemnity of *Christmas*.

For

14. *For every Day in Advent.*

For this End, we beseech thee, O blessed Lord, both to teach us, and help us to make this Preparation, that so our Souls may be in such a Disposition, as to receive the Benefit and Graces of his Coming.

And since no Disposition can be better for us than that of his own Holy Spirit, in which he came into the World, help us, by thy Divine Grace, to live at this Time by the same Spirit, and let this, O God, have the Direction of our inward and outward Man.

Christ came into the World poor, humble, and meek ; grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet him : Grant that we may now be watchful in resisting all the Suggestions of Pride and Prodigality ; that nothing of a vain or haughty Mind may appear either in our Words or Actions ; but that, practising a general Humility, we may be easy, mild, and moderate to all, and thus endeavour to live by the Spirit of Christ. R. *Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet our Redeemer.*

Christ came into the World to suffer many Tribulations from the Hands of Sinners, and was patient under all, having an entire Conformity to the Will of his Father : Grant, O God, we may thus prepare to meet him : Grant we may
now

For every Day in Advent. 15

now be watchful in resisting all Motions to Passion and Impatience; that nothing of Contention or Quarrelling be found in us; and that we may force our Will to a peaceable Submission, under all Troubles, whatever shall befall us in this Time. R. *Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet our Redeemer.*

Christ came into the World to suffer for our Sins, so that his whole Life was a Life of the Cross, and was finish'd at length on *Mount Calvary*, by his dying on the Cross: Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet him; Grant we may now consider what Punishment is due to our Sins; and entering into the Spirit of Penance, may we let no Day pass without a Sin-offering, without suffering something, as Justice shall demand in Chastisement of our Offences; and where our Sin has been, there may the Punishment be. R. *Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet our Redeemer.*

Christ came into the World, not to do his own Will, but the Will of his Heavenly Father, and to seek his Glory in all Things: Grant, O God, we may thus prepare to meet him; Grant we may be watchful now at this Time above all of others, in resisting the Corruption of our own Wills, and carefully avoiding whatever is a Transgression of thy Commandments:

16 *For every Day in Advent.*

ments: Grant we may not now consult our Inclination, Humour or Fancy, but what is most for thy Glory, and the Good of our Souls, and to this refer all we do. *R. Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet our Redeemer.*

Christ came into the World to do Good to all; Grant, O God, we may thus prepare to meet him: Grant we may be watchful at this Time above all others, in avoiding every Thing that can be injurious to our Neighbour, whether in afflicting him, or giving him Scandal, or drawing him into Sin, or casting any Blemish on his Reputation; but in all Things, O God, may we follow the Spirit of Charity, being forward in bringing Comfort and Relief to all, as far as their Circumstances shall require, and ours permit. *Grant, O God, that thus we may prepare to meet our Redeemer.*

Grant, Blessed Lord, that thus labouring to walk, at this holy Time, according to the Spirit and Example of Jesus Christ, we may prepare to meet him coming into the World, and be so happy as to receive the Blessings of his Incarnation.

He comes to deliver Sinners from all their Iniquities, and we can have no Hopes of Salvation but through him. How miserable therefore, how wretched shall we be,

be, if going on in the Ways of Sin, we lose the Benefit of his coming? O God of Mercy, suffer us not to be thus blind, obstinate, and faithless; but, having thus express'd thy Love to Man, and the Desire of his Salvation, as to send thy only Son to become his Redeemer, perfect this Mercy in us by thy Grace, and grant we may make such a good Use of this holy Time, as to remove all Indispositions from our Souls, and be prepared to receive the Effects of thy Goodness. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

RAISE up our Hearts, O Lord, we beseech thee, to prepare the Way of thy only Son, that by his Coming, being reconcil'd to thee, we may serve thee in Holiness all the Days of our Lives; who liveth and reigneth with thee in Unity, &c.

Second

*Second Sunday in A D V E N T.**Gospel, MATTH. xi. 2, 10.*

*I*N this Day's Gospel we hear of St. John Baptist sending Two of his Disciples to Christ (for their own Instruction) to enquire of him whether he was the Person that was to come, or whether they were to look for another. Hence let us this Day pray for Grace, that we may look for no other but Christ, and place our whole Confidence in him, of obtaining Everlasting Life.

Let us pray.

O GOD, who hast manifested thy infinite Mercy to Man in sending thy only Son to teach us by his Word and Example, and save us by his Blood; Grant we beseech thee, we may become true Disciples of Jesus, and entertain no Hopes of Salvation but through him.

Give us likewise a true Sense to understand what it is to be Saved by Jesus: That it is to have a Faith in Jesus, to believe in his Word, to follow his Doctrine, to observe his Precepts, to be directed by his Gospel, to live by his Spirit, and
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to seek through the Mediation of his sacred Blood, to obtain Life everlasting.

In this manner, O God, may we seek Salvation through Jesus, and so confide in him, as to believe there is no other by whom we can be saved. And hence, O Lord, since Salvation is only through him, may it be our daily Sollicitude to take him for our Way, to walk as he has directed; and let this be every Day both the Proof and Fruit of our Hope.

For this, O Lord, we confess, that if we hope for Salvation, and do not endeavour to live by the Gospel of Jesus, the Case is very plain that our Hope is not in Jesus, but it must be in some other.

And therefore since Jesus calls upon all to be Humble and Meek of Heart, those who hope for Salvation through Jesus, must labour to be humble and meek: And as for all such as follow the Ways of Pride and Ambition, and in such Ways have all their Comfort. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways, we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

Jesus calls upon all his Followers to deny themselves, to take up their Cross daily, and follow him; and those who hope for Salvation through Jesus, must do in this as he requires: But as for all such as are govern'd by Self-love, make it their general Study
to

20 *Second Sunday in Advent.*

to gratify Inclination, and fly from the Cross. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways, we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

Jesus calls upon all his Followers to Love one another, to forgive Injuries, to do good to those that hate us, and to pray for our Persecutors; and such as hope for Salvation through Jesus, must labour in this to observe what he commands: But for those who bear Hatred, who open their Hearts to Envy, Malice, Ill-Will, and the Desire of Revenge, who keep up Contentions, and back-bite their Neighbour. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

Jesus calls upon all his Followers to be clean of Heart, promising the Sight of God to all that are so; and such as hope for Salvation through Jesus, must labour in this to do what he prescribes: But as for those who open their Hearts to Uncleaness, who have not yet crucified their Flesh, with its Desires and Lust, but like the Heathens, follow the Concupiscence of the Eyes and Lusts of the Flesh. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

Jesus

Second Sunday in Advent. 21

Jesus calls upon all his Followers not to steal, but to do to others as they would have others do to them; and such as hope for Salvation through Jesus, must labour to follow this Rule which he gives: But as for those who are unjust, who use Frauds, over-reach their Neighbour, who keep back the Hire of the Labourer, who oppress the Poor, or do wrong. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

Jesus calls upon all his Followers to take heed, lest at any Time their Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness; and such as hope for Salvation through Jesus must follow where he directs: And as for all such who follow the Works of the Flesh, in Revellings, Rioting and Drunkenness, whose God is their Belly, whose Glory is in their Shame. R. *We confess that such place not their Hope in Jesus; and therefore from such Ways we beseech thee, O God, to deliver us.*

This, O God, we confess, because there can be no true and saving hope in Jesus, but for such as make it there serious Endeavour to walk in those Ways which he teaches; for 'tis only to such he makes his Promises, and there can be no solid Hope of Salvation, but what is built on the Promises of Christ.

Where.

22 *Second Sunday in Advent.*

Wherefore, O most gracious Lord, we beseech thee, to grant us this Mercy, that whereas through thy Gift we have a Faith in Jesus, so we may be solicitous to direct the whole Method of our Lives, not according to Nature or the World, but according to what he teaches, that we may shew our whole Confidence of Salvation to be in him, and that there is no other whom we look for, or in whom we put our Trust.

To this Question put by St. John's Disciples, Christ returned this Answer, Go and tell John the Things you have heard and seen; the Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead rise again, the Gospel is preached to the Poor, and blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in me Hence.

Let us pray.

O Blessed Redeemer, who didst give Proof of being the *Messias*, not by thy Words only and Doctrine, but by thy Works; and to these didst appeal for the Confirmation of such as doubted: Grant, we beseech thee, that in this we may be solicitous to follow thy Example, making it our daily Endeavour so to Model our Lives by thy Gospel, and do all Things to Edification, as without any other Arguments,

Second Sunday in Advent. 23

ments, but by our Works only, to shew whose Disciples we are.

For this End we implore thy Help, O most loving Redeemer, that nothing may be found in the whole Method of our Lives contrary to the Purity of thy Gospel, nothing that can give Offence, nothing disedifying; for if we serve thee only with our Lips, and our Works are not answerable to our Profession, our Religion and Hopes must be vain.

That we may obtain the Effect of this our Petition, we beseech thee, O Blessed Jesus, to manifest thy self a Redeemer to us, by the like miraculous Effects, as thou didst to the Disciples of the *Baptist*; and these, O God, we most humbly petition thee to work in our Souls.

Take away all Blindness from us, remove all Deceit, and grant our Eyes may be so open'd as to know our selves, and discern the Way of Salvation. R. *Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Take away all Lameness; and amidst all the Temptations of this Life, grant we may walk according to thy Gospel, with a firm, equal and persevering Step. R. *Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Take

24 *Second Sunday in Advent.*

Take from us the great Corruption of our Heart, weaken all our evil Passions, and cleanse us from all our Sins. *R. Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Take from us all Deafness, that with Joy and Fruit we may hear thy Word, and never shut our Ears against those who would advise us for the Good of our Souls. *R. Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Take from us all that causes Death in our Souls; and may we now live as those that are risen to a new Life in Jesus Christ. *R. Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Take from us that ill Spirit which is scandalized at what is good, which cannot bear the Contradictions of the narrow Way, and laughs at in others what it does not practise itself. *R. Hear us, O God, and thus shew thy self a Redeemer to us.*

Grant us, O Merciful Redeemer, the Favour of these Petitions, that by such evident Proofs of thy Goodness, not only our Lips, but our Heart and Soul, and all the Actions of our Life, may publish thy Glory, and confess to the whole World, that thou art our God and our Saviour. This, O God, we acknowledge by our Faith; may our Life and Conversation join in the same Confession. *Amen.*

Let

Third Sunday in Advent. 25

Let us pray.

RAISE up our Hearts, O Lord, to prepare the Way of thy Only Son, that by his Coming we may serve thee with pure Minds; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost, &c.

Third Sunday in ADVENT.

JOHN i. 19, 28.

THIS Day's Gospel is a Message of the Jews to St. John Baptist, demanding who he is; and seeming prepar'd to own him for the Messias; but he absolutely disowning that Character, as likewise of being a Prophet, and challenging no more than of being a Voice; let us hence beg of Almighty God, that it may be our constant Endeavour to imitate this Humility of the Baptist, but more especially at this Time.

Let us pray.

O GOD, who wast pleas'd by St. John Baptist to prepare the Way of our Lord, and to manifest in him so remarkable a Humility; mercifully grant that we

TOM. I.

B

who

26 *Third Sunday in Advent.*

who now expect the Coming of our Lord, may prepare to receive him, according to the Method taught us by thy holy Baptist.

Grant we may prepare the Way of our Lord, by labouring every Day to obtain the Spirit of a true Humility, and therefore to be ever watchful against all the Suggestions of Pride, so as not to be surpriz'd by its Snares, nor deluded by its Subtilties.

We prepare for a Redeemer, who came into the World in an humble Way, having nothing of those Contrivances which are for the Service of Pride: In this same Way, O God, may we prepare to receive him, and therefore be careful that nothing of that be found in us which he renounc'd at his Birth, and if favour'd by us, can be no other Preparation but to exclude him from our Souls.

Hence, O most gracious Lord, in the first Place, we make this Petition to thee, That we may never pretend to any Thing commendable which does not belong to us, nor strive to raise our Reputation by what is false; for, since all Pride is hateful to thee, this must certainly be thy Abhorrence, which is a Complication of Evils, and built upon a Lie. *R. Deliver us, we beseech thee, from this Evil, which can be no Preparation to receive our Lord.*

Ano-

Another Petition we make to thee, O God, That we may never in Silence permit others to ascribe what belongs not to us, but, with the humble *Baptist*, declare the Truth, tho' to our own Disadvantage. R. *Grant this, O God, because Humility is the best Preparation to receive our Lord.*

Again, we ask, O God, that whatever is found commendable in us, we may never let this feed in us a vain Humour, nor even own it, but, as the *Baptist* did, in as humble a Manner as Truth will permit. R. *Grant this, O God, because Humility is the best Preparation to receive our Lord.*

Another Petition we offer, O God, That whatever we discover of Advantage in us, we may never be ambitious of Honours, nor set our Hearts upon Preferment or Place, but with the *Baptist* think our selves most unworthy of the meanest Employments. R. *Grant this, O God, because Humility is the best Preparation to receive our Lord.*

Still another Petition we address to thee, O God, That whatever mean Office is desired of us, or whenever an Opportunity offers of doing what we think beneath us, we may readily embrace it, and rejoice in the Occasion of humbling our Pride. R. *Grant this, O God, because Humility is the best Preparation to receive our Lord.*

28 *Third Sunday in Advent.*

Give us Leave, O God, to conclude our Petitions with this, That whatever Humiliation we shall now meet with, whether in being injured, reproach'd, despised, ill-spoken of, reprov'd, contradicted, or any other way lessen'd in Publick, we may give a Check to all Disturbance, and readily submit in Silence as to what is best for us. *R. Grant this, O God, because Humility is the best Preparation to receive our Lord.*

Hear these our Petitions, O God, and mercifully grant them, because we are sensible how very disagreeable all Kind of indulg'd or affected Pride must be at this Time; for what has Pride to do in us, when the Lord of Heaven, when the eternal Wisdom of the Father, humbles himself in becoming Man! What has Pride to do in the sinful Worm, while he prepares to receive an humbled God!

O blessed Redeemer, we see so much Humility in thee, that we cannot, without Confusion, behold the Pride that is in our selves; and as thy Precursor St. *John* appear'd in thy own Livery, so we see a Necessity that thy Disciples should be humble too; so far, that we cannot be sincere in confessing thee to be our God, nor serious in adoring thee, if we come with our Pride to confess and adore thee in thy humbled State.

Where-

Third Sunday in Advent. 29

Wherefore, O God, since this is the very Thing we prepare to do, shew thy Mercy to us, and help us now at this Time, in making Resistance against all the Attempts of Pride, and bringing our selves to the Practice of that Humility which is so visible in the Work of our Redemption.

For this End direct us, we beseech thee, by thy Grace, to ask the same Question every Day of our selves which was put to St. *John*, *Tu quis es? Who art thou? What say'st thou of thyself?* And may those humbling Lessons be well imprinted in our Hearts, which must appear in the Answer to it.

May we ask of our Body, *Tu quis es? What art thou?* And hence let this Truth be reviv'd, That it is nothing but Corruption, that the whole Fabrick must soon be dissolv'd, and, being cast out of Doors by its best Friends as insufferable, must be laid under Ground, there to be consumed by its own Corruption. *Tu quis es? Who art thou that canst be proud of this?* R. *We confess, O God, here is nothing to be proud of, but we have Reason to be humbled under the Sight of our own Misery.*

May we ask of our Soul, *Tu quis es? What art thou?* And hence may we remember, that tho' there appear many Excellencies in it, yet it is all the Work and Gift of God; that there is no one Excel-

30 *Third Sunday in Advent.*

lency or Advantage in it but what we abuse by our Passions, and corrupt by our Sin; that, having Reason, we act against it; having an Understanding, we blind it; having a Will, we turn it against thee, our God, and let it be our Guide into all that is Evil; and having thus for a Time abused thy Blessings, what is to be the Conclusion? Our Souls are to be presented before thee, our God, we are to be called to an Account for all the Evils we have done; left without Friend or Help; to be judg'd according as we have done in this Life; and endless Eternity waiting to be the Execution of the Sentence that is pronounc'd against us. *Tu quis es? Who art thou that canst be proud of this?* R. *We confess, O God, here is nothing to be proud of, but we have Reason to be humbled under the Sight of our own Misery.*

May we ask again of all in which we at present take Delight, of our Riches, State, Honours, Companions, fine Cloaths, Beauty, Divertisements, pleasing Liberties, and whatever Satisfaction there are in this World, may we ask of all, *Tu quis es? Who and what are you?* And hence may we remember that none of these can last long; that they are subject to great Change and Inconstancy; that they have general Gall mixt with the Enjoyment; a small Accident robs us of them; Sickness and Pain take off the Satisfaction; they pass
away

Third Sunday in Advent. 31

away as a Dream or Shadow, and after a short Time Death snatches us from them all, and nothing of them is left but the Account we are to give of the sinful Abuse of thy Creatures and Blessings. *Tu quis es? Who art thou that canst be proud of this? R. We confess, O God, here is nothing to be proud of, but we have Reason to be humbled under the Sight of our Misery.*

In this Manner give us Grace, O God, to look upon our selves, and on all the unhappy Circumstances of our Life; and hence may we see sufficient Motives to suppress all that Pride to which we are so strongly inclin'd.

Hence may we see the Unreasonableness of Pride in such poor Worms as we are; and hence be furnish'd with Resolutions of shewing no Favour to it.

Hence may we see the Necessity of being humble, if we pretend to be just, since there can be no Pride but what has Injustice in it: May we likewise see thy Mercy in teaching us to be humble; and that, since Christ has so humbled himself for our Sakes, we cannot with Truth call our selves his Disciples if we set up an Interest for Pride, and decline the Practice of that Virtue which we cannot be ashamed of without being ashamed of him.

Teach us, O God, to be truly humble.

R. And thus prepar'd, may we meet our Redeemer.

B 4

Let

32 *Fourth Sunday in Advent.*

Let us pray.

GIVE Ear, O Lord, we beseech thee, to our Prayers, and with thy Grace enlighten the Darkeness of our Minds; who livest and reignest with God the Father, in the Unity, &c.

Fourth Sunday in ADVENT.

LUKE iii. 1, 6.

IN this Day's Gospel we have an Account of the Preaching of St. John Baptist; and his principal Endeavour being to call upon the Jews to do Penance for the Remission of their Sins, so to prepare for the Coming of Christ, let us beg Grace this Day to take the same Method, and by Penance seeking Pardon of our Sins, thus prepare to meet our Redeemer.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and everlasting God, who in the Preaching of St. John Baptist to the Jews hast taught us in what Manner we are to prepare for receiving Christ coming into the World; grant we may obey the Summons of this great Prophet, and by this

Fourth Sunday in Advent. 33

this Preparation partake of the Mercies of the approaching Solemnity.

And since his Summons was that all should do Penance for the Remission of their Sins, give us thy Grace, we beseech thee, that we may sincerely undertake and effectually perform this great Work; for behold we confess our Weakness, that altho' we are sensible our whole Business of Eternity depends on our Repentance, yet there is no one Point in which we are more apt to deceive our selves than in this.

We often think of Repenting, and thro' the Direction of thy heavenly Light make several Proposals in order to it; nay, we often begin it: But, O God, how do we fail in the Sincerity of carrying on and finishing what we undertake! How short do we come of being truly converted, of changing our Lives, and bringing forth such worthy Fruits of Penance as the holy *Baptist* advises for the Remission of our Sins!

In this, O God, we see how much we want thy Grace; and therefore now at this Time, when we can expect no Part in thy Mercies, but through a true Repentance, we make our Supplications to thee, most humbly beseeching thy infinite Goodness to have Compassion on us, and help us.

We acknowledge our Unworthiness to be such, O God, through our manifold Iniquities, as to deserve no Help from thy

34. *Fourth Sunday in Advent.*

Hands: But, O merciful Father, if thou observeſt our Iniquities, who ſhall ſtand before thee? Look not therefore upon our Sins, but upon that infinite Love which ſent thy only Son into the World to call Sinners to Repentance, and to become a Propitiation for their Sins.

By that Love we beſeech thee to have Compaſſion on us; and now being call'd upon to repent of our Sins, ſhew this Mercy to thy Servants, as by thy Grace to help us in all that belongs to a true Repentance. Leave us no more to deceive our ſelves by our own Blindneſs and Weakneſs, but let thy heavenly Light go before us to begin and finiſh this Work, that we may not die in our Sins, but partake of the Mercy of this holy Time.

In the firſt Place we aſk of thee, O God, a ſincere Deſire of Repentance, ſuch a Deſire as may not only be expreſs'd in a paſſing Thought, but be a fix'd and perſevering Act of our Soul, ariſing from the Conviction of our Unhappineſs while under the Guilt of Sin.

Help us, O God, in confirming this Deſire in us; and for this End give us a true Senſe of the Deformity of Sin, ſuch as may ſtrike us with Fear as of the worſt of Monſters, and raiſe in us an Earneſtneſs to be deliver'd from it as from the greateſt Evils.

Hence,

Hence, O blessed Lord, may this Desire oblige us to consider, and even to enquire what we are to do to be freed from the Burthen and Guilt of Sin. Thus did the People, thus the Publicans, thus the Soldiers, who came to the *Baptist*; they heard him preach the Necessity of Penance, and being desirous to be freed from their Sins, they presently applied themselves to him, and all with one Voice ask'd to be inform'd, *What must we do?*

In this, O God, may we join with them, and manifest our Desire of Amendment, in asking what we have to do; and carry with this Question such a docil and submissive Mind, as to be ready to do all whatever can be necessary for regaining our Peace with thee our God, and healing all the Distempers of our Souls.

This Readiness may we shew, O God, in examining the Root of our Evils, and in being prepar'd to lay the Ax to the Root; to cut off whatever it be that seeds our Distemper. Here, we confess, is the difficult Task, and in this we now implore thy Help, to work such a Change in our Souls, as to think nothing difficult that is for the Remedy of our Sin.

Our Misfortune has been in fearing nothing that discourag'd the gratifying our sinful Appetite; but now, O God, let this be the Change to fear nothing that discourage,

36 *Fourth Sunday in Advent.*

rages the cutting off our Sin at the Root ; all has been hitherto sacrificed to Inclination and Self-love, now let Inclination and Self-love be sacrificed to thee, O God, and to the Obligations of a sincere Repentance.

This is the only Proof we can have of a true Conversion ; and if our Repentance be sincere, this must be the Fruit of it. Shew therefore thy Mercy to us, O God, in this Point ; suffer us no longer to deceive our selves with barren Purposes, or such as have only an imperfect Fruit ; but may we manifest our Conversion in fighting against Sin, and in the establish'd and fix'd Methods of a new Life ; since, if there be not a new Life, our Repentance cannot be true.

We ask therefore of thee, O God, this Grace to begin a new Life, and not only this, but likewise that, in undertaking it, one principal Care may be to bring forth worthy Fruits of Penance. This is what the *Baptist* requires, and 'tis thy Grace must both direct and help us in it.

Help us therefore, we beseech thee, and make it our Concern, not only that we bring forth Fruits of Penance, but to examine if they be *worthy* : To see that they be answerable to the Number, Greatness, and Scandal of our Sins, to the Force of our own sinful Habits, to the divine Anger and Judgments which we have provok'd, to the particular Mercy which has snatch'd us, as
it

it were, out of the Mouth of Hell, whilst so many others have perish'd in it.

Grant, O God, that in the Method of a new Life we may have due Regard to these Particulars, and thus not only do Penance, but likewise do that Penance which belongs to us; and is the Demand of Justice: That we may not only be careful to avoid Sin, which is the Obligation of those who have preserved their Innocence, but likewise be solicitous to overcome and punish Sin, which is the Duty of the *Penitent*: That we may not only serve Righteousness, which is the Duty of every one that is just, but likewise with Proportion to the Disservice and Injury we have done it, and to the Scandal we have given; which is the Obligation of those who are enjoyn'd to bring forth worthy Fruits of Penance.

And this being our Case, give us, we beseech thee, O God, Courage and Strength to perform what we are oblig'd to, that our Repentance may not be regulated by Self-love, as our Sins have been, but be directed by Justice, and thus be accepted by thee.

In this Manner teach us, O God, to make our Way streight; that as far as our Hearts and Lives have been hitherto corrupted and made crooked by Sin, so now by Penance they may be unbent, and made conformable to thy Will, which is the only true Measure of Holiness. R. *Hear us, O God,*

38 *Fourth Sunday in Advent.*

God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.

That our Hearts being emptied of the Love of Creatures, they may be filled up with the Love of thee, their only Good, and so every Valley be fill'd. R. *Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That all our Ambition, Haughtiness, Pride and Stubbornness, may be succeeded by Humility, and so every Mountain and Hill be brought low. R. *Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

Hear us, O God, in these our Petitions, that so following the Direction of the *Baptist* in our Penance, we may be prepared to see the Salvation of God.

Let us pray.

RAISE up, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Power, and come and succour us with a strong Hand, that by the Assistance of thy Grace, thy indulgent Mercy may hasten what is delay'd by our Sins; who livest and reignest, &c.

CHRIST-

CHRISTMAS-NIGHT.

LUKE ii. 1. 14.

THIS being the Night in which the Son of God, being made Man for our Salvation, was Born of the Virgin Mary in the Stable of Bethlehem ; this being the Night in which the Angels Assembled, gave Praise to God in Acknowledgment of this his Infinite Mercy to Man ; let us now join our Voices with this heavenly Host, and making one Choir with them, endeavour in the same Spirit of Adoration and Gratitude, to give Praise to our God.

V. Glory be to God on high.

R. And Peace on Earth, to Men of Goodwill.

V. We praise thee.

R. We bless thee.

V. We adore thee.

R. We glorify thee ; we give thee Thanks for thy great Glory.

V. Lord God, Heavenly King, Father Almighty.

R. Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son.

V. Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the
the

the Father, who takest away the Sins of the World.

R. Have Mercy upon us.

V. Who takest away the Sins of the World.

R. Hear our Prayer's.

V. Who sittest at the Right Hand of the Father.

R. Have Mercy on us.

V. For thou only art Holy.

R. Thou only art our Lord.

V. Thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most High, together with the Holy Ghost, in the Glory of God the Father.

R. Amen.

Let us pray.

O Eternal God, Father Almighty, who in Compassion to lost Man, didst send thy only Son to become his Redeemer from that unhappy State; grant, we beseech thee, that we who are here assembled to acknowledge the Mercy of this Night, may find the Benefit of it in our Souls, in the Pardon of all our Sins. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who lives, and reigns, &c.

Since we believe that God the Son became Man and subjected himself to Misery purely in Compassion to us, that by his Sufferings we might be rescued from Sin, and of Slaves be made

made the Children and Heirs of God; let us meet him with our Praises, as New-born this Night into the World, and bless his holy Name for all those Mercies which he undertook at this Time, and for whatever he suffer'd in this his first Entrance upon the Work of our Redemption. While Heaven bows to Earth, let Earth likewise bow to Heaven.

Blessed Jesus, true God and Man, born this Night in the Form of an helpless Infant. *R. Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, who being true God, glorious and incapable of Suffering, didst for our Sakes subject thyself to all our Infirmities. *R. Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, who having the Heavens for thy Throne, didst chuse this Night a poor Stable for thy Abode. *R. Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, who being God incomprehensible, wast pleased, in Love to us, to be wrapt up in Swadling-Clothes, and laid in a Manger. *R. Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, who being adored in Heaven by all the Choirs of Angels, didst this Night so humble thyself, as to have an Ox and an Ass for thy Attendants. *R. Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, who overflowing with unchangeable Happiness in Heaven, wast pleased for our Redemption, to make Choice of the bitter-

bitterest Potion on Earth, and this Night didst begin with the Severities of Cold and Poverty. R. *Praise and Glory be to thee for ever.*

Blessed Jesus, we acknowledge thy Mercy to be infinite in undertaking this Work of our Redemption: It is far above our Comprehension; it infinitely exceeds all the Gratitude we can express. But accept, we beseech thee, this humble Acknowledgment we make, while we now bow down, and with all the Powers of our Souls pronounce these sacred Words; Praise, Glory, Adoration, and Thanksgiving, be to thee for ever and ever, for that thou hast been pleased thus to humble thyself for the Salvation of Man.

Having thus in our poor Way paid one Homage of Adoration and Thanksgiving to our new-born Saviour, let us now approach to him, and since we know him to be full of Mercy, since we know the Design of his coming upon Earth is to shew Mercy, since we know he is made Man for the Sake of us Sinners, to seek the lost Sheep, to help the Distressed, and to heal all our Infirmities; let us now bow down again, and in the humblest Manner we can; put up our Petitions to him, and desire him to begin the Mediation he has undertaken for us Sinners.

Lord, have Mercy on us.

Christ, have Mercy on us.

Lord,



Third Sunday of Advent.

G O S P E L.

St. *John*, i. 20. ends Verse. 28.

HE *confessed, and denied it not ; and he confessed that I am not Christ.* This is the Answer of St. *John Baptist* to the *Jews*, enquiring of him, if he was the *Messias*.

The whole Time of *Advent* ought to be a Preparation of Christians for celebrating the Festival of the Birth of Christ. God then humbled himself for Man, and Man cannot better prepare for the due acknowledgement of this Mercy, than by sincerely humbling himself before God : For this End, the Church proposes this Day the Example of the *Baptist*, who, by his Austerity, Preaching, and the Administration of a new Baptism, having given sufficient Occasion to the *Jews* of supposing him to be the *Messias* ; and being now questioned upon the Point, positively denies it, takes no Advantage of their Mistakes, and owns no more than he is obliged

ged to by the Force of their Demands, in doing Right to Truth.

This Spirit of Humility must be our Pattern in the Preparation we make : If Christ humbled himself, we cannot be his Disciples, but by a like Humility. We may come to some part of this, if we ask every one of ourselves the Question put to St. John, *Tu quis es ? Who art thou ? Quid dicis de teipso ? What sayest thou of thyself ?* For what can we answer ? If we look into ourselves, and there see the Uncertainty and Darknes of our Understanding, the Perverseness of our Will, the Corruption of our Affections, the Blindness of our Passions : If we consider our Weakness, in the little we can do, of all the Good we propose ; our Ingratitude, in abusing the infinite Blessings of Heaven ; our Unreasonableness, in acting contrary to what we believe ; in providing more for this Life, than for that which is eternal ; in our daily Sollicitude for Things of the least Concern, and neglecting the greater, if we number all our Sins, which are the daily Effects of this our Weakness and Corruption ; what can we answer to the Question proposed ; but that we are of all Creatures, the most unhappy ; that we deserve nothing but Contempt, Reproach, and Punishment ?

Christmas-Night.

43

Lord, have Mercy on us.

Jesus Christ, hear us.

Jesus Christ, graciously hear us.

Jesus, the eternal Word of the
Father,

Jesus, Consubstantial with the Fa-
ther,

Jesus, the Splendour of thy Fa-
ther's Glory,

Jesus, the Image of thy Father's
Substance,

Jesus, the eternal Wisdom,

Jesus, the Brightness of eternal
Light,

Jesus, by whom all Things were
made,

Jesus, the Angel of the great
Counsel,

Jesus, the Prince of Peace,

Jesus, promised to the Patriarchs,

Jesus, desired by all Nations,

Jesus, sent by the Father into the
World,

Jesus, the Word made Flesh,

Jesus, God with us,

Jesus, made in the Form of a Ser-
vant,

Jesus, Born of the Virgin *Mary*,

Jesus, wrapped in Swadling-Clothes,

Jesus, laid in the Manger,

Jesus, fed at a Virgin's Breast,

Jesus, proclaimed by the Angels,

Jesus,

Have Mercy on us.

Jesus, adored by the Shepherds,
 Jesus, the Father of the World to
 come,

Jesus, the Joy of Angels,
 Jesus, the King of Patriarchs,
 Jesus, the Inspirer of the Pro-
 phets,

Jesus, Master of the Apostles,
 Jesus, Teacher of the Evangelists,
 Jesus, the Strength of Martyrs,
 Jesus, the Light of Confessors,
 Jesus, the Purity of Virgins,
 Jesus, the Crown of all the Saints,

Be Merciful to us, Spare us, O Jesus.

Be Merciful to us, Hear us, O Jesus.

From all our Sins,

From Hardness of Heart,

From all Unbelief,

From the Neglect of Salvation,

From the Love of the World,

From all Vicious Self-love,

From a Dissipated and Unthinking
 Life,

From Pride and Sloth,

From Prodigality and all Excess,

From Detraction and Lying,

From Sensuality and Hypocrisy,

From all Quarrels and Impatience,

From Immoderate Sollicitude,

From Faint-heartedness and Dejec-
 tion of Spirit,

Have Mercy on us.

Deliver us, O Jesus.

From

Christmas-Night.

45

From the Violence of whatever
Evils molest us,

From the Forgetfulness and Abuse
of thy Mercies,

From the Abuse of this Holy
Time,

From Gluttony and Intemperance,

By thy Coming,

By thy Nativity,

By all the Mercies of this Night,

By thy Humiliation in this Night,

By all whatever thou didst suffer
this Night,

We Sinners,

That thou wouldst vouchsafe to
give us thy Grace, whereby we may
become thy true Disciples,

That in all Things we may take
thee for our Pattern, and be ever mind-
ful of following thy Example,

That we may learn to renounce
all our Pride, and follow thy Humili-
ties,

That we may suffer with thy Pa-
tience whatever Evils befall us,

That in a cheerful Silence we may
readily submit to whatever Humilia-
tions God has appointed for us,

That having undertaken to be our
Advocate, thou would'st vouchsafe
to plead for us, and obtain for us

Deliver us, O Jesus.

We beseech thee, hear us.

Have Mercy on us.

*Jesus.
Jesus.*

Deliver us, O Jesus.

From

this

this Night the Pardon of all our Sins,

That thou would'st mercifully consider all our Weaknesses, and sinful Customs, and give us all necessary Grace, Courage and Perseverance to overcome them,

That thou would'st give a Blessing to thy Church, and deliver it from all Abuses,

That thou would'st give a Blessing to this Nation, and, delivering it from all Vice and Errour, make it to thy self a holy People,

That thou would'st give a Blessing to us who are here assembled in Memory of thy Nativity, and powerfully assist us with thy Grace, according as our several Necessities require,

Son of God,

Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World, *Spare us, O Jesus,*

Lamb of God, who takest away the Sins of the World, *Hear us, O Jesus.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the Sins of the World, *Jesus, have Mercy on us.*

Let us pray.

Jesus, Son of the Living God, who camest into this World to save that which is Lost?

We beseech thee, hear us.

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Loſt? behold here aPart of that unhappy Kind which was loſt thro' Sin, but now has Hopes in thee: Have Compaſſion on us, we beſeech thee, and by thy Infinite Mercy perfect in us the Work of our Redemption.

Jeſus, Saviour of the World, let the Mercy of this Night extend to us thy Servants here met together in Honour of thy ſacred Birth, and help us ſo powerfully in overcoming all the Corruption that is yet within us, that having in thee ſo plentiful a Redemption, we may not be loſt through any Neglect of ours.

Jeſus, infinite in Power and Mercy, to thee we appeal under all Infirmities to which we are ſubject; to thee we repreſent all the Dangers we meet in the Way of Salvation; thou art come to be our Saviour, be then a Saviour to us, and give us all that Grace which thou ſee'ſt neceſſary for us, and let not the Work of thy Mercy be made void in us through our Iniquity.

Jeſus, the eternal Wiſdom, thou art come to reſcue an unhappy People from their Miſery; conſider, we beſeech thee, the endleſs Follies and Indiscretions to which we are ſubject, and pour forth thy Grace upon us, by which we may become wiſe to Eternity.

Jeſus, the eternal Light, have Compaſſion no our Darkneſs, and by thy Grace prevent all the Miſchiefs of it: Leave us
no

We beſeech thee, hear us.

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Loſt?*

no more to ourselves, but mercifully undertake to be our Guide, and direct our Feet in the Way of thy Commandments.

Having made our Petitions to our Redeemer and recommended our Cause into his Hands, that we may more effectually obtain his Grace and Protection; let us now offer our selves to him, and make a solemn Protestation of abiding faithful in his Service to the End of our Lives.

O Blessed Jesus, true God and Man, Saviour of the World, we confess here before thee, that we have no Help nor Hope but by thee: We have no Redemption of Sin but through thee: We have no Peace with God but through thee: We have no Expectation of any Blessing but through thee: We have no Hopes of Life but through thee: All is come to us from God through thee, who art the one Mediator between God and Men.

Wherefore, O Jesus, having all our Dependance on thee, to thee we offer our selves, as to our God to protect us, as to our Master to teach us, as to our Light to direct us, as to our Redeemer to save us; to thee we offer ourselves to hear thy Words, to receive thy Faith, to walk in thy Ways, to observe thy Precepts, to fear thy Judgments, and to keep thy Law; to thee we offer ourselves, both as to Body and Soul, putting ourselves wholly into thy Hands, and desiring thee to order and appoint for

us,

us, both as to Health and Sickneſs, Life and Death, whatever ſhall be moſt for thy Glory, and for our everlaſting Good.

And as for us, behold we ſolemnly engage, as far as lies in us, to be faithful to thee; we reſolve to forſake ourſelves for to follow thee; we here undertake to renounce the wicked Ways of the World, and of our own Corruption, that we may do thy holy Will.

But becauſe we know how great our Weakneſs is, and that we have nothing in ourſelves wherein we can truſt, therefore behold with all Humility we lay all our Infirmities before thee, and moſt earneſtly beſeech thee, that whereas thou comeſt to be our Redeemer, thou woul'd'ſt conſider all our Weakneſs, and mercifully ſupply us with ſuch Grace, whereby we may effectually overcome all Evil, and faithfully perform whatever Obligations we have here undertaken, and are due to thee.

Hear us, O Jeſus, in this Petition we make to thee: It is in Behalf of poor Sinners, whom thou cameſt to ſeek; ſhew Mercy to us in this Night of Mercy, and hear our Prayer; thou haſt made thyſelf ours this Night by putting on our Nature, and we deſire to become thine, thy Servants, thy Diſciples, thy Children: O Jeſus, confirm our Deſires, and grant that this Night we may put off, we may renounce what-

ever is yet in us displeasing to thee, whatever is not agreeable to the Profession we here make of being thy Disciples : Grant we may put on thee.

And as often as we shall find it difficult to renounce our own Ways for to follow thee, let us then remember, O Jesus, what thou hast done, what thou hast undertaken for us this Night ; and let this fill us with Shame at the Difficulties we make in following thee : Thou, who art God eternal, hast humbled thyself to the Form of a Servant, and what Humiliation can be then too great for us poor sinful Clay ? When Heaven has stoop'd to Earth, what can there be too much for us Sinners to bend to ? When thou, God of infinite Glory, hast subjected thyself to the severest of humane Afflictions, to the worst of Reproaches, to the most cruel Torments, what Self-denials can we esteem too hard, what can we think too much for us to suffer ?

No, Blessed Jesus, nothing can be too much, nothing too hard for us to suffer in following thee ; if we are to lose all the Comforts of Life, and even Life itself in thy Cause, we have thy Example to lead us on ; lead us therefore, we beseech thee, as thou hast undertaken ; carry us on in thy own Ways, and teach us in all Things to do thy Will ; give us thy Blessing this Night, and let it be the Blessing of heavenly Grace, that,
whilst

St. Stephen, December 26. 51

whilst thou comest to seek us, we may be found by thee; and coming to save us, we may be of that happy Number, who are to be saved by thee. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who, by the Rays of the true Light, hast dispell'd the Darknes of this sacred Night; Grant, we beseech thee, that knowing the Mysteries of this Light on Earth, we may come to the Possession of his Joys in Heaven, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the Unity, &c.

St. Stephen, December 26.

Matth. xxiii. 34, 39.

THIS being the Day of the glorious Martyr St. Stephen, who after Christ's Passion first gave his Life to Christ, let us beg of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, on this Festival, that, to imitate the great Example of this first Martyr, we may obtain the Gift of Patience in all Afflictions, and learn to suffer as the Disciples of Jesus.

O Blessed Redeemer, who art pleased to exercise thy Servants here on Earth with Variety of Trials, and hast given us such won-

derful Examples of Patience in thy Martyrs ; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may have Grace to imitate what we honour in them, and that in all our Troubles we may follow their sacred Steps.

O Blessed Redeemer, we confess here before thee, we are very much wanting in this Duty of Patience, and instead of improving under Troubles, we generally are Losers by them. We do not then gain Crowns, as thy Martyrs did, but by our Impatience remove to a greater Distance from Heaven.

This we acknowledge to be our Misfortune, and knowing how great an one this is, in then provoking thy Displeasure against us, when we have the fairest Opportunities of gaining thy Favour ; therefore behold, O God, we here in the Spirit of Humility confess our Faults before thee, and hope thou wilt have Compassion on us, and grant this Day a better and more Christian Spirit.

That we receive, not the Troubles of this Life, as the Exercise of thy heavenly Hand. R. *We confess this to be our Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

That we submit, not to the Troubles of this Life, as to the Appointment or Execution of thy holy Will. R. *We confess this to be our Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

That

St. Stephen, December 26. 53

That we lose all Comfort in Time of Trouble, and are not solicitous to make that Benefit of it, which thou, O Lord, designest in the Exercise thou givest us. R. *We confess this to be our Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

That we sink in Spirit, fall into Dejection, and retain not a lively Hope in thee. R. *We confess this to be our Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

That we become impatient, fretful, and uneasy, and think ourselves miserable under thy Scourge. R. *We confess this to be our Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

That we let Nature govern us under our Troubles, and suffer rather like Heathens than Christians. R. *We confess this to be our great Fault, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.*

And now, O God, behold we lay our Desire before thee; we sincerely desire to amend this our great Weakness; we desire to practise what we profess, and follow the Gospel of Jesus Christ in suffering all Troubles with Humility and Patience. We see how thou honourest and crownest Patience in thy Martyrs; we have Encouragement from their Example, and we desire to partake of their Rewards. Have Regard, O God, to those our Desires, we beseech thee, and mercifully hear our Prayers.

54 St. Stephen, December 26.

Consider our great Weakness, O Lord, and according to our Necessities so mercifully help us with thy Grace, and give us Strength to go under whatever Burthen thou shalt please to lay upon us. *R. Grant this our Petition, O God, and mercifully hear our Prayers.*

Pour forth upon us, we beseech thee, the same Spirit which supported the Martyrs under all their Trials, which carried them through with an untired Courage, and brought them to the Reward of their Labours. *R. Grant this our Petition, O God, and mercifully hear our Prayers.*

Give us, O Blessed Lord, such an humble Heart, that we may readily submit to whatever are the Appointments of thy holy Will: Give us such Patience, that, with a composed and peaceable Mind, we may suffer whatever thou shalt ordain, either as the Scourge or Exercise of this Life. *R. Grant this our Petition, O God, and mercifully hear our Prayers.*

Give us Grace to resist all Inclinations to Uneasiness, Impatience, or Dejection of Mind; and as soon as these begin to appear, may we resolutely stand against them, and with a true Resignation cast all our Care upon thee. *R. Grant this our Petition, O God, and mercifully hear our Prayers.*

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Let

Let us pray.

O God, who hast commanded us to be patient under all Evils, and promised to be the Rewarder of all such as persevere to the End, have Compassion on our Weakness, and strengthen us by thy heavenly Grace; that, by thee, we may be enabled to observe thy Commands, and by thy Mercy obtain what thy Goodness has promised.

O Blessed Jesus, who wast pleased to drink of the bitterest Cup; who didst submit thy Shoulders to the Weight of the Cross, and to all its Torments, in Compliance with thy Father's Will; Hear us in thy Mercy this Day, and so effectually assist us with thy Grace, that as often as we feel any Weight upon us, we may not then yield to Nature, but force Nature to bend to thy holy Will, and be ever solicitous to follow thee in the Spirit of the Cross.

O God, the Holy Ghost, who didst so confirm the Apostles, and this holy Deacon, St. Stephen, that they rejoiced under all the Evils this World could bring upon them; Pour forth, we beseech thee, thy holy Spirit this Day so plentifully into our Hearts, that we may be raised above our natural Weakness, find Comfort under our

56 St. Stephen, December 26.

present Troubles, and never more offend thee through any Impatience, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Stephen having shewn not only a singular Patience in his Sufferings, but likewise a most remarkable Charity in praying for his Persecutors, at the very Time when they were stoning him to Death; let us now beg of the God of Martyrs, that he will give us this Day a large Portion of this Charity towards our Neighbour, and especially towards those, whom we apprehend to be our Enemies.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast commanded us to have Charity for every Neighbour, without excepting those who are our Enemies; Grant, we beseech thee, this Charity may abundantly dwell in our Hearts, and that our Corruption may not make any Exceptions, where thy manifest Will has declared there shall be none.

That we may more effectually obtain what we ask, mercifully deliver us, O Lord, we beseech thee, from all that Passion and Perverseness of Temper, which makes this thy Law so very difficult to us. We confess our Corruption, in this Point, to be very great, and that our Unhappiness is equal to it, in being so averse to what thou commandest. But have Mercy now,
O God,

St. Stephen, December 26. 57

O God, and let thy holy Gface either change our Nature, or help us to overcome it.

Wherefore now, O Father of Mercy, behold we lay our Petitions before thee, and most earnestly beseech thee to hear our Prayers.

From Anger and Passion,
From Ill-Will and Hatred,
From Malice and Desire of Revenge,
From admitting Resentments,
From meditating upon Injuries,
From the Suggestions of an exception-
tious Temper,

From all uncharitable Construc-
tions,

From hearkning to Flatterers and
Ill-Advisers,

From the Workings of a disturbed
Imagination,

From all inward Disquiets,

From all Stubbornness and Perverse-
ness of Judgment,

From all Degrees of Dislike and
Aversion,

From all Complaints against our
Neighbour,

From Repeating and Magnifying
Affronts,

From all these Infirmities, Indiscretions,
and Evil Practices, we beseech thee, O
Lord, mercifully to deliver us, and to
give us a better Spirit, even the Spirit of

Deliver us, O Lord.

58 St. Stephen, December 26.

thy blessed Martyr, St. Stephen: And grant, that under all kinds of Provocations, we may no more follow the Suggestions of our own Corruption, but the Method of that Charity which he has shewn us.

Grant, O God, that whenever we are provoked or injured, we may take it in the best Sense, not as the Effect of Design or Malice, but only of Mistake, Surprise, or Weakness. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may take it all as from thy heavenly Hand, which has a Right to exercise or punish us, in whatever Manner thou pleasest. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may receive it with the peaceable Submission due to thy Orders, and always say, It is our Lord has done it: Blessed be the Name of our Lord. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That hence we may admit no Dislike or Ill-Will against our Neighbour. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may freely speak to him, and omit no Expressions of a neighbourly and friendly Correspondence. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we never speak one Word against him, but be ready to do all Service for him that lies in our Power. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That

St. Stephen, December 26. 59

That we never rejoyce in any Evil that happens to him, nor in any Word that is spoken by others to his Prejudice. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may use no other Expedient for overcoming our Adversaries, than by doing Good for Evil. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we deceive not ourselves in finding Pretexts for living in Contention, or at Difference with any Neighbour. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That whatever Difference happens, we may be sincerely industrious in our best Endeavours for a speedy Reconciliation. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we depart not this Life, but in perfect Charity with every Neighbour, and forgive all Trespases, as we desire to be forgiven by thee. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Let us pray.

O Father of Mercy, who knowest how necessary Charity is for us; Grant us this great Virtue, we beseech thee, and suffer no perverse Humour in us, to exclude that from our Hearts, without which we can have no Hopes for Salvation.

Help

60 St. Stephen, December 26.

Help us, O God, in overcoming all Difficulties within us, and give us Grace to stand against all the Inclinations of Nature, as often as we find them contrary to thy Commands, and to thy holy Will, which thou hast in such plain Terms manifested to us.

And since thou hast so expressly declared, that we must hope for no Pardon of our Sins from thee, except we forgive all Injuries, and are reconciled from our Hearts to those who have offended us ; vouchsafe us, we beseech thee, thy Grace, that we may comply with this Condition of Mercy, and never so blindly pursue any Adversary, as to shut ourselves out of Heaven, in Revenge to him.

Deliver us, we beseech thee, from all Delusion in this great Point, and grant we may not deceive ourselves by any false Reasoning ; rather, O God, let it be the Effect of thy Grace in us cheerfully to observe thy Commands, and to suspect all that as false and treacherous, which pretends to dispense with them.

But since thou knowest, O God, this thy Command to be difficult to Nature, give us thy holy Light, to discover all its Pretexts and Shufflings, and by the Strength of thy heavenly Assistance, may we overcome all its Difficulties, and force it to bend to thy Law. Help us, O God, in these Straits,

Straits, where we must either overcome, or be lost for ever.

And thou, O Blessed Jesus, who hast not only commanded, but likewise practised this Charity in an eminent Degree, and powerfully assisted such weak Vessels as we are, so as to follow thy Example in loving their Enemies; manifest likewise this thy Power, we beseech thee, in us thy Servants; and whatever the Aversion of Nature be, yet grant, O God, that from this Time, in all Provocations, we may trample upon Nature to follow thee, and in this shew whose Disciples we are.

And now, O God, having made our Petitions, we likewise lay our Desires and Resolutions before thee, purposing, through thy holy Grace, to follow the Pattern of this Day, both in Patience and Charity, both in bearing Troubles, and forgiving Injuries: And we intend, in the very next Occasions that happen, to shew the Sincerity of what we propose. But it is thou, O Lord, must give the Blessing to our Endeavours. Bless us therefore, who are here assembled, we beseech thee, O God, and let thy Grace, for strengthening us in these two great Virtues of Charity and Patience, be in us the Fruit of this Festival.

Let

Let us pray.

HELP us, O Lord, we beseech thee, in imitating what we honour, that we may learn to love even our Enemies; Because we celebrate his Martyrdom, who, even for his Persecutors, became a Petitioner to our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the Unity.

St. John, December 27.

John xxi. 20, 24.

THIS being the Festival of St. John, the beloved Disciple of Christ, the Apostle and Evangelist, who, at the last Supper, rested on the Breast of Jesus, and in this shew'd how much he loved Jesus, and how much he was beloved by him; let us, on this Festival, both confess our Fault, and acknowledge it our Misfortune, that so very little of the Love of Jesus is found in us, and that we seek more Rest in Creatures than in him.

It is thy great Mercy to us, we confess it, O Lord, that thou commandest us to love thee, and wilt accept of the Love of such poor Worms as we are.

'Tis

'Tis yet thy greater Mercy, that thou offerest thyself for our eternal Possession, and to be to us an everlasting Inheritance of unchangeable Bliss.

And requirest no other Condition for this Purchase, but that we give our Hearts to thee, and love thee.

O God, how Infinite and Adorable is this thy Mercy !

To offer thyself for our Happiness, and to make it our Interest to love thee, and yet, at the same Time, to command and sue for our Love, as if it were not our Interest, but thy own :

As if not we, but thou, O God, wast to be made happy by our Love !

Infinite, O God, is this thy Goodness to Man :

And Infinite our Misery, that after being thus called, invited, courted, and commanded, by our God to love him, yet we do not love him.

That instead of loving him infinitely amiable, we let his Creatures steal away our Hearts.

We set our Affections on perishing Trifles, and are fond of Vanity and Smoak, as if they were substantial Goods.

We run after Things most pernicious to us, both as to Body and Soul, and open our Breasts to what we know most displeasing to our God.

We

We are averse to all those Ways that lead us to God; and with most eager Desires, pursue such Things as we know will hinder, or quite put us out of the Way of Bliss.

What thou, O God, recommendest to us, we entertain with Dislike; and, if we undertake to perform thy Will, it is generally with Carelessness and Sloth.

But what thou disapprovest, that, O God, we grasp at with Eagerness, and in the Commands of Idleness and Folly, there our whole Souls are employ'd.

This, O God, we acknowledge to be our Misfortune, and our Sin; and being under these great Indispositions of Soul, we are obliged to own, that the Resting-Place of our Hearts is not in the Breast of Jesus, but that we seek in Creatures, what is only to be found in him. This is a great Misery and Blindness; and being so unlike to the holy Disposition we honour in the Saint of this Day, we have Reason to blush, and be confounded at it, and humbly beg Pardon for the sinful Part.

Wherefore, O God, behold, here sensible of our Unhappiness, we bow down before thee, and implore thy Mercy for our great and spreading Sin, in not loving thee as we ought.

That

That we have hitherto set our Affections on Things of Earth more than of Heaven.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That we have placed our Comfort more in thy Creatures than in thee, our God.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That we have sought with more Earnestness, the Vanities and Follies of this World, than the Possession of thee our everlasting Good.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That we have let every impertinent Trouble or Concern, and even Idleness itself, waste all those Spirits and Life, which should have been employ'd in seeking and sighing for thee, our Lord.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That we have let every trifling Business, Dust and Dross, and all Kinds of Sin, take away our Hearts from thee, our God.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That we have made Idols of all thy Creatures, and of ourselves, and for these have forsaken thee, our God.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That, in Compliance with Company, we have despised thy Law, and transgressed those Duties, which thou hast enjoined us.

R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

That to please our Senses, to favour our own Inclinations or Humour, we have neglected Eternity, and broken thy Commandments.

ments. R. *In thy Mercy, O Lord, forgive us.*

Forgive us, O Lord, we most humbly beseech thee, all these our great Sins, and shew thy Mercy to us thy Servants, who, having a Sense of our manifold Unworthiness, lament it here before thee, and are in Confusion within ourselves, to see how very insincere we are in the Profession, we so often make of loving and serving thee.

Have Compassion on us, O God, in this our unhappy State, and hear us now calling upon thee, for the Relief of our Misery. We appeal to thy infinite Mercy, and in thy Goodness place our whole Confidence; for in ourselves we see nothing but Corruption, Blindness, and Deceit; Evils enough to move thee to Pity, but nothing wherein we can trust. Have Compassion therefore on us, we beseech thee, and according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies now hear our Prayers.

Let thy Grace, O God, now descend upon us, and work a powerful Change in our Hearts.

May it weaken all that Corruption in us, which carries us to Creatures, and makes us forsake thee, our God.

May it lessen our Sollicitude for all that is Temporal, and turn our Hearts to seek the one Thing necessary.

May

May it take off our Fondness from all that perishes, and teach us to despise what is unworthy of our Love.

Let thy Grace, O God, kindle in our Hearts that holy Fire of divine Love, and with this may we love thee, with this may we seek thee.

May thy holy Love, O God, rule our Hearts; may it have the Command of all that is within us.

May all our Passions be subject to it; may our Affections, Inclinations, and Desires, be under its Influence.

May this holy Love have the Government of our Senses, of our Conversation, of our Tongue, of our Appetite, of our leisure Hours, and our Sleep.

May all our Life be regulated by it; and may we never take any other Liberties but what this approves.

Thus, O God, may we shew ourselves thy Children, by being led in all Things by the Spirit of thee, our Father.

Another Petition we make to thee, O God, that we may desire, above all Things, to come to the Possession of thee.

That we may be every Day mindful of this, being the End for which we were created, and that it ought to be the great Business of our Lives.

That we may esteem all Things as Gain, which help us on in our Way to Bliss.

That

That we may count all that our Misfortune, which is a Clog upon the Soul, and makes it in Love with Earth.

That we may place our great Comfort in a virtuous Life, and in doing in all Things thy holy Will.

That we may reckon that the only Unhappiness to be in thy Displeasure, or in a sinful State; and therefore be resolute in never yielding to what thou, O Lord, hast forbidden.

Hear us, O God, in these our Petitions.

R. *And let not our Unworthiness turn away thy Mercy from us.*

Be our Advocate, O Jesus, and plead for us.

R. *And by all thy Mercies, which thou hast shew'd us, grant that we may love thee.*

May thy infinite Goodness draw our Hearts strong to thee.

R. *And may nothing created hinder us from resting in thy Bosom.*

Lord, hear my Prayer.

R. *And let my Cry come to thee.*

Let us pray.

O GOD, who see'st our Blindness in seeking Happiness in Creatures, whilst we are invited to the Possession of infinite and unchangeable Bliss, have Compassion on our Misery, and by thy Grace so change
this

this Perverseness of Nature, that truly discerning what is Good, we may only there seek Rest and Happiness, where alone they are to be found.

Grant we may now seek all our Errors in this Kind, and especially where we have misplaced our Affections, to the Prejudice of our eternal Good ; and now let it be thy Mercy to us, that we do thee Justice, in taking from Creatures what belongs to thee alone.

Discover to us, O God, by thy heavenly Light, whatever Inclinations are immoderate in us, and convince us that there cannot be Innocence, wherever there is Excess. Hence, O Lord, we beseech thee, give us both Discretion and Strength for retrenching all that, in our Affections and Passions, which transgresses those Bounds which thou hast set ; that so whilst we use thy Creatures, as thou hast indulged to our Benefit, we may not abuse them to thy Displeasure, and to the Injury of that Love which is due to thee.

This Petition we press to thee, O God, with all the Earnestness of our Souls ; because we are sensible, that all our greatest Sins, and even Misfortunes in this World, hence take their Rise ; that we keep not our Affections, Inclinations, and Passions, within their due Bounds ; that any one of these becoming immoderate, blinds our
Under-

Understanding, corrupts our Reason; and all those Faculties, which thou hast given us for our Conduct, become confederate against us, and treacherously conspire to our Ruin. And hence, O God, how many sinful Mischiefs follow! Who can say, where is the End of Indiscretion, Folly, and Sin, whilst common Evils in this Disorder are made warrantable, and Pretexts are found to excuse the Greatest!

Wherefore, we most earnestly beseech thee, O God, that in thy Grace we may find Help against our Corruption. Teach us, O Blessed Lord, and give us Strength to moderate all our Passions; grant we may be jealous of their first Attempts, and not be too credulous, even when they seem innocent. Make us courageous in resisting Evil, but let us not be bold in trusting our Passions, which are very seldom indulged but with their evident Danger, who shew Favour to them. O God, teach us to be wise in this Point, that, by a timely Fear, we may be more secure against all Excess; and, by being watchful against what is immoderate, our Hearts may have that Liberty, which thou hast ordain'd, even the Liberty for seeking Rest in thee.

This Rest we desire, and therefore ask of thee, O God, to disengage our Hearts this Day from whatever it be, that at present hinders us from taking up our Rest there,

there, where there is true Comfort and Satisfaction, without Danger of Excess. This is the Lesson, which thy beloved Apostle, O Blessed Jesus, has given us. Shew us Mercy on this his Festival; we honour his Virtue, we admire that singular Holiness in him, which was loved by thee. Shew us this Mercy, that we may join with him in loving thee, and, in Earnest, endeavour to remove all those Obstacles, which hinder us from resting in thee.

And now, for the Conclusion of this Day's Devotion, let us join in the Collect of this Festival.

This is *John*, who, at the Last Supper, rested on our Lord's Breast. Blessed Apostle, to whom the Secrets of Heaven were revealed.

Blessed *John* is greatly to be honour'd.

R. *Who, at Supper, rested on our Lord's Breast.*

Let us pray.

SEND forth the Beams of thy Light, most merciful Lord, upon thy Church, that, being taught by the Instructions of Saint *John*, thy Apostle and Evangelist, she may obtain the Rewards of Eternity. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy

Holy Innocents, December 28.

Matt. ii. 13, 18.

THIS Day being a Memorial of that Sacrifice offer'd to God in the Blood of so many Innocents, barbarously murther'd by the Cruelty of Herod, who sought amongst them to take away the Life of Christ; let us pray, on this Festival, for all Infants born into the World, that all may be regenerated by the Sacrament of Baptism, that by this holy Laver, as many as shall be taken out of the World, may be prepared to be Companions in Bliss with those holy Victims we commemorate this Day, who were baptized in their own Blood.

Let us pray.

HEAR us, O God, we beseech thee, in Behalf of all those, who are born of Christian Parents, and shew that Mercy to them, that they may be all born again of Water and the Holy Ghost, as thou hast ordained; and in this holy Institution, being purified from that original Guilt, they bring with them into the World, as many as are snatch'd away in those tender Years,
may

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may have nothing to Obstruct their Happiness in the full Possession of thee, their Father, and their God.

Have Compassion on these, O Father of Mercy, and suffer them not to be taken away under that Guilt, which is their sad Inheritance from *Adam*. And since 'tis a Guilt, which makes them the Children of Wrath, and the Object of thy Displeasure, grant they may receive the Benefit of that holy Ordinance, which thy Goodness has appointed for their Remedy; that, by this, being made the living Members of Jesus Christ, they may be capable of that Salvation, which is not to be obtained, but thro' Jesus Christ, and by those who are in him.

Give, O God, to Parents, a Sense of this great Duty; that they may not delay or neglect that upon Ceremony, or any human Considerations, which thou hast declared an indispensable Condition of Bliss. Let their Faith of Eternity prevent in them that unnatural Cruelty, of depriving their Children of their better Life, and thus becoming the worst of Homicides. O God! what a gnawing Worm must there be on their Consciences, who, by their Want of true Concern, bring eternal Mischiefs on their Children, such as can never more be in their Power to remedy! Let not this, O God, be the Case of any believing Parent.

TOM. I.

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And

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And as for all others, who, through Error of Judgment, expose their Children, by depriving them of this Ordinance of Mercy, be thou, O God, a Light to such Parents. Manifest thy Truth to them, we beseech thee, and teach them to seek Salvation for their Children through Christ, by observing his Law, and incorporating them into his Body, that so in Christ they may be saved, who out of him must be out of the Way of that Happiness, which he has purchased by his Blood. Shew Mercy, O God, to all these, who are unhappily deceived, and by thy Grace remove from them, whatever is the Occasion of their Blindness, that so being enlightened by thee, they may have Reason to bless thy Holy Name, both for themselves and their Children. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray likewise for all Parents, that having regenerated their Children in Baptism, they may not be wanting in any Care that is necessary for their Childrens Good, whether as to Soul or Body.

O God, who hast given Parents a Charge of their Children, and wilt call them to an Account for whatever is wanting in their Children of a Christian Education; Grant, we beseech thee, that they may have a true Sense of their Duty, and with a due Sollicitude be watchful in satisfying every

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Holy Innocents, Dec. 28. 75

Part of it. Give them, O God, Understanding, that they may take right Methods in raising their Infants; and by no Humour, Indiscretion, or Ill-Advice, do any thing, that may be destructive of their Life or Health.

Give them, O God, the Spirit of Christian Parents, that they may train up their Children in such a Way, as may best prepare them for living as becomes the Children of God. Make them solicitous, we beseech thee, in satisfying this great Obligation, on which so very much depends the eternal Well-being of their Children.

For this End, we make it our Petition to thee, to deliver Parents from both the hurtful Extremes of immoderate Fondness and Severity; take from them likewise all Moroseness, Ill-Humour and Passion; and teach them to oblige their Children to a virtuous Life, by Love and good Example.

Let it be also the Effect of thy holy Grace, O God, to exempt them from all other pernicious Indiscretions, such as bring Ruin on their Children, or very much expose them, while they go on blindly, without any Suspicion of doing any Harm. Help them, O God, in all other Respects, that having their Commission from thee, and their Trust being very difficult, they

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may be bountifully assisted by thy Grace, according to the Difficulties of their State; that so they may faithfully discharge their whole Duty, to their own eternal Comfort, and their Childrens everlasting Good. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This being a Day subject to some Superstitious Observations, even among Believers, let us pray, on this Festival, that Almighty God would be pleased to deliver us, and all other Christians, from all Kinds of Superstitions, that so God may be duly honoured, and all those Vanities removed, which lessen that Confidence we ought to have in him.

Let us pray.

HEAR us, O God, we beseech thee, now joining in Prayer; and since it is for the Remedy of such Evils, which we believe very prejudicial to that Duty we owe to thee, be propitious to us, and with a favourable Acceptance receiving our Petitions, mercifully grant what we ask.

From all vain Observations of Days, as if some were lucky, and others unlucky.
R. *O Lord, deliver us.*

From all vain Observations of Omens, Signs, or particular Accidents, as if our Misfortunes had any Dependence on them.
R. *O Lord, deliver us.*

From

From all vain Observations of Dreams, as if these were to determine our Fears or our Hopes, or had any Thing foreboding in them. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From the Use of all Kinds of Charms. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From seeking Health or Ease from Pain, by Characters, Figures, Writings, or any other such Prescriptions, Practices, or Means, which neither from God or Nature, have any Connection with the Effect desired. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From consulting Magicians, Fortune-tellers, or others, who pretend to discover Things unknown, or foretell what is to come. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From using any other sort of Means or Practices, for the Discovery of what is yet unknown, or for foreseeing what is to come. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From consulting Astrologers, and from all undue Dependence on what the Stars forebode. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

From all other Kinds of Superstitions, whatever they be, whether such as can be suspected of Compact with the Devil, or others, which seem to be vain Observations, and insignificant Trifles. *R. O Lord, deliver us.*

Deliver us, O Lord, we beseech thee, from all these evil Practices, and give us

78 Holy Innocents, Dec. 28.

Grace to overcome whatever Inclinations we have to them.

Because we believe them to be the Remnants of Heathenism, and Customs derived from the Times of Infidelity.

We believe them to be Contrivances of Satan for lessening our Dependence on thee, our God.

We believe them to be sinful, because it is either trusting in Vanity, or seeking Help from the Devil.

We believe them to be Snares for taking off our Hearts from God, and filling them with vain Hopes or Fears.

We believe them to be a Transgression of the first Commandment, and injurious to that Faith and Hope, we are obliged to have in thee.

Wherefore, O God, behold, sensible of the Sin, we here renounce these Evils before thee.

We acknowledge thee to be our God, and here declare our Abhorrence of whatever Practices entrench upon thy Prerogative.

We confess ourselves to be wholly in thy Hands, and according to the Orders of thy Providence, so shall every Thing befall us.

We know that no Part of our Lives is the Effect of Chance, and that our Lot is not left to be determined by Accidents.
No,

No, Blessed Lord, we acknowledge thee the supreme Ruler of the Universe, and that without thee neither a Leaf falls from a Tree, nor a Hair from our Heads.

Hence, O God, we bow down and adore thee, and submit to whatever shall be thy holy Will in us.

We are Content with the Darknes of our State, and desire not to break in upon those Secerts, which thou art pleased to hide from us.

We submit to all the Exercises of this Life, and offer ourselves to suffer whatever thou shall appoint.

And as for any Relief we desire none, but what is approved by thee.

For to make use of any other, we confess it to be nothing less than going to the Devil for Help.

And rather than do thus, we acknowledge it our Obligation to suffer the Extremity of Evils, even with the Loss of our Lives.

Thus, O God, we profess, thus we desire to do, and we most humbly beg thy Grace for the Execution of our Desires.

Let us pray.

O God, who seest all our Infirmities, and by whose Grace alone we can hope for their Remedy; help us, we beseech thee, in this Particular, and grant that by thy Assistance, we may overcome whatever Evils we are led to by our own Corruption.

Help us in discerning all such Practices, which can be suspected of Superstition; and since, by thy Grace, we are sensible how unlawful they are, so mercifully confirm us against them, that we may rather chuse to submit to all Inconveniences, than seek Help by the Hazard of such Guilt.

Pardon, O God, we beseech thee, whatever have been our past Follies in this kind; we acknowledge them with Humility, and with Sincerity lay before thee our Desires of Amendment; and we hope in thy Mercy to find the Pardon of our Sins. And since we have thee, our God, of infinite Power and Goodness to trust to, let it be from this Time a Confusion to us, to think of trusting in any Thing unlawful, in vain Observations or Dreams.

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant our Petitions.

R. Mer-

Holy Innocents, Dec. 28. 81

R. Mercifully pardon our Sins, and give us Grace to amend.

This being a Day of Holy Innocents translated from Earth to Heaven, it must call to our Minds the Condition, which our Blessed Redeemer has declared necessary for coming to that State of Bliss. For it is he has said to all his Followers, except you be converted, and become as little Children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Since therefore, he that is Judge of the Quick and Dead, has thus declared it, let us beg on this Festival of Innocents, that this Condition may be fulfilled in us, and that we may be so truly converted, as to become as little Children.

Let us pray.

O God, who on this Day hast called us to celebrate the Memory of the Holy Innocents, that were offered a Sacrifice to thee, and hast commanded us to become as little Children, that we may be Companions with them in Bliss; mercifully grant we may sincerely consider what thou requirest of us, and effectually perform what thou commandest.

Grant we may labour to put of all that Corruption, which, with the Number of our Days and Years, is grown up with us.

D 5

R. Mer-

82 Holy Innocents, Dec. 28.

R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.

Grant we may be truly converted to thee, and by a sincere Repentance obtain such a full Discharge of all our Sins, as in the Purity of our Conscience to become as little Children. *R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may renounce all our Ambition, Pride and Vanity, and become truly humble as little Children. *R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may lay aside all Malice, Desire of Revenge, Hatred and Ill-Will, and under all Provocations be as free from Resentments as little Children. *R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may admit of no Jealousies, Suspicions or rash Judgments, but in the Calm of an undisturbed Mind, become as little Children. *R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may bear all Troubles without Dejection or Murmuring, and put ourselves entirely into thy Hands without any Reserve, with the Submission of little Children. *R. Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may speak Evil of no Neighbour whatever, but under the Restraint of Charity be as silent in this Point as little Children.

Holy Innocents, Dec. 28. 83

Children. R. *Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may avoid all kind of Lying, Cursing, Oaths, Abuse of thy Holy Name, and all Manner of Evil-speaking, and by not offending in Words, become as little Children. R. *Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may be exempt from all Deceit, Hypocrisy and Double-dealing, and do all Things in Singleness of Heart as little Children. R. *Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Grant we may be free from all Immoderate Love of the World, from Covetousness, Sollicitude, Intemperance, from all Sensuality, from Concupiscence of the Heart and Eyes, and in Body and Mind become Pure as little Children. R. *Mercifully hear us, O Lord, and grant our Petition.*

Christ, hear us.

R. *Christ, graciously hear us.*

Let us pray.

O Blessed Redeemer, who hast given us this Direction of becoming as little Children, for the Gaining the Kingdom of Heaven; mercifully assist us with thy Holy Grace, that diligently observing what thou
hast

84 Holy Innocents, Dec. 28.

hast commanded, we may not fail of inheriting thy Promises.

Grant we may seriously examine all our Ways, and seeing how very unlike we are to that Innocent Age, which thou proposest to us for our Pattern, we may in earnest labour to overcome ourselves, and never be tired with our Endeavours, till we are come to some Resemblance of that infant State, which thou hast set before us.

Grant we may put off that Corruption which is grown up with us, and with Violence break from all our evil Ways, that when we are called to appear before thee, we may be found cloathed with Righteousness, with the Innocence, Purity and Simplicity of Infants, who know not what it is to sin: And thus having performed the Conditions, may be received into everlasting Glory; who liveth and reigneth with God the Father, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, World without End.
Amen.

Hear us, O God, on this Day of Holy Innocents.

R. And grant we may become as little Children.

Lord, hear our Prayer.

R. And let our Cry come to thee.

Let

St. Thomas of Canterbury, &c. 85

Let us pray.

O God, whose Praise the Innocent Martyrs published this Day, not by speaking, but dying; mortify in us all vicious Inclinations, that professing thy Faith with our Lips, we may likewise shew it in our Actions. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

St. Thomas of Canterbury, Dec. 29.

JOHN X. II, 16.

IT being the Day of St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, who standing up in Defence of the Rights and Liberties of the Church, was forced into Banishment, where having suffered many difficult Trials with a remarkable Constancy, he was at length recalled to his Flock, and after some time, by the Violence of wicked Men, was murdered in his own Church at Canterbury; let us pray on this Festival for all the Pastors of Christ's Church, that God would please to fit them for their great Charge, and give them Grace to be faithful in every Part of it.

Let

Let us pray.

O Blessed God, who hast raised such weak Vessels to the Dignity of being Pastors of thy Church, and hast given them a Commission to watch over thy Flock, to feed it, and defend it from the Wolves; mercifully assist them according to the Difficulties of their Charge; and may thy holy Grace enable them to satisfy the Obligations which thou hast laid upon them, to the Good of thy Flock, and the Glory of thy holy Name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Grant, O God, they may shew themselves in all Things as the Ministers of Christ. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may be the Lights of the World and the Salt of the Earth. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may live without Reproof, do all to Edification, that their Ministry be not blamed. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may be good Shepherds, not leaving their Sheep to the Wolves, but be ever ready to give their Lives for their Sheep. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may be an Example to all Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity,

Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, and in Purity.
We beseech thee, hear us.

That they may have an Abhorrence of all Covetousness, and do nothing for filthy Gain. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they do nothing through Strife, and avoid all foolish and unnecessary Questions, which make Strife and Divisions. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That being list to Christ, they entangle not themselves in the Affairs of this Life. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they seek not themselves, but Jesus Christ in all Things. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they be faithful in their Charge, and betray not the Church, either through Weakness, or for any Worldly Interest. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may be zealous in reforming all Corruptions and Abuses, and let no Evils grow up by their Connivance. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That having chosen them out of the World for so Sacred a Function, thou wouldst purify their hearts from the Love of the World, from the Love of Pleasures, Vanity, and from all Ambition. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That they may not live by a Worldly Spirit, but be Holy in all Things, as their Function is Holy. *We beseech thee, hear us.*
 Hear

88 *St. Thomas of Canterbury,*

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, in these our Petitions, and shew Mercy to thy Church, by assisting those Pastors whom thou hast put over it. Let them have a particular Share in thy Providence, upon whose Example and Conduct depends so very much the Good of the whole Flock ; and suffer not them to be Darkness, who by Christ's Appointment are to be the Lights of the World.

Grant, O God, as they succeed the Apostles, and receive their Power from them, so they may inherit their Spirit. For what can they do in a Function so Divine, if the Spirit that governs in them be only Human ? Live thou therefore, O God, in them, and be thou their Guide, for thus only can they be good Guides to thy Faithful.

Grant, O God, that being taken from among Men, their Lives may not be according to Man. Thou hast chosen them to be the Salt of the Earth, to deliver it from the unhappy Effects of its own Corruption : And how great must the Judgment be, if losing their Savour, they join in those very Corruptions, which they ought to remedy ? Deliver, O God, thy Faithful from this Unhappiness, and let not this Judgment be the Punishment of their Sins.

Grant, O God, thy Law may be their Rule ; and give them Grace, rather to surrender their Lives, than depart from it.

May

May they be faithful in what they have undertaken, and be above all private Ends in whatever they do. Let no Human Authority force them from their Duty, neither let them compliment any Civil Magistrate with the Rights of the Church. Help them, O God, as thou knowest their Wants: And being thy Vicars, O Jesus, upon Earth, may the daily Influence of thy Grace attend them, and by this may they be qualified for feeding and watching over thy Church, which thou hast purchased with thy Blood.

It being an exasperated Prince, that disturb'd the Peace of the Church, and was the Occasion of this Sacrilegious Attempt in taking away the Life of this Prelate; let us pray for all Christian Kings and Princes, that God would be their Director in all Things, and make them the Protectors of his Church.

Have Mercy, O God, we beseech thee, on all the Princes of thy People.

And may all those, who believe in thy Name, have a particular Part in thy Protection.

Make them as Nursing-fathers to thy Church, and by their Power may they defend its Rights.

May they stand by it against all the Invaders of its Liberties and Truths;

And by their Authority concur in the Execution of all its Laws.

With

90 *St. Thomas of Canterbury,*

With the same Power may they join in
the Suppression of Novelty and Vice ;

And be a Terror upon all those who any
Ways attempt to disturb its Peace.

Thus, O God, may all who bear the
Sword sanctify it, in making it serviceable
to Justice, Truth and Virtue :

And like the good Kings of *Israel* ex-
press a Zeal in building, repairing and defend-
ing the Temple of their God.

But then, O God, let it be thy Mercy to
them, never to abuse this Power to the
Prejudice of thy Church.

And since they act by thy Commission,
let them not turn thy own Power against
thyself.

Let them not break in upon that Au-
thority, which Christ has given to the Pa-
stors of his Flock.

Nor endeavour to divide that Power,
which by thy Ordinance is wholly vested in
others. Let them not tie up the Hands of
thy Pastors, nor render them incapable of
performing the Charge thou hast given them.

Let them not make void thy Commis-
sion, and thus expose thy Truth and
Faith to the Invasion of every bold Pre-
tender.

And where-ever thy Church, O God,
lies under any Oppression, let it be the
Glory of Princes, to restore it to the Li-
berties of its first Institution.

May

May it be their daily Sollicitude to evacuate all such Laws and Customs, as are injurious to thy Church;

And not prostitute its Sacred Dignities to the Service of the State:

Nor make its Revenues be a Reward to those, whose disorderly Lives are a Scandal to their Profession:

Nor fill up its Vacancies, but only with such, whose Virtue and Merits plead for their Preferment.

Save, O God, the Rulers of thy People.

R. And make them, like thy Servant David, after thy own Heart.

Give them Wisdom from above, that they may discern Justice and Judgment.

R. And may their Power be the Support of thy Holy Ordinance.

Make them Zealous in the Defence of thy Church.

R. And may they remove whatever is an Oppression to it.

Lord, hear my Prayer.

And let my Cry come to thee.

Let us pray.

O God, by whom Kings reign, and the Princes of the Earth exercise their Power; vouchsafe, I beseech thee, to direct and sanctify all Christian Princes, that they, who by thy Appointment are to govern others, may be wholly govern'd by thee.

Pour

92 St. Thomas of Canterbury,

Pour forth upon them, O God, the Spirit of Piety, the Spirit of Justice, and of Zeal, that they may be the Defenders of all thy Ordinances, and thy Church find in them its Protection and Peace.

Give them a true sense, O God, to understand how acceptable a Service it is to thee, to maintain that Church, which was purchas'd by the Blood of thy only Son. And may they understand too how great is the Sin of opposing it, and that it cannot be a Christian's Part to set up the Power of the State against that Power which Christ has left in his Church.

To thee, O God, we recommend this great Affair; for since it is by thy Power that Princes act, we most earnestly beseech thee so to regulate this Power in them by thy Holy Grace, that it may never be abus'd to the Prejudice of thy Church.

Abide therefore, O Blessed Lord, with all that bear the Sword, that they may so govern thy People, and protect thy Church, as at their Deaths to change their Temporal Crowns for others that are eternal, and reign with thee for ever in thy Kingdom of Glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

The Martyr of this Day having been Archbishop of Canterbury, we ought on this Festival to offer up our Prayers to God in Behalf

half of our Country, that he would be its Protector, and visit it with his Heavenly Blessings.

Let us pray.

O God, by whose Mercy the World subsists, and to whose Power every Nation of the Earth is subject; have Mercy on this Nation, we beseech thee, and according to its Necessities, which are all known to thee, so pour forth thy Blessings upon it, that by the Help of thy own Gifts, it may in all Things be well-pleasing in thy Sight.

Remove all thy Scourges from it, we beseech thee, and let thy Grace be the Remedy of all its Disorders; and now mercifully hear our Prayers, while we call upon thee for its Deliverance from all that is sinful.

Have Mercy, O God, upon this Nation.

R. *And be thou its powerful Deliverer.*

From Atheism and Prophaneness. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From all Irreligion and the Contempt of thy Sacred Mysteries. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From all Presumption, and the Abuse of thy Holy Word. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From

94 *St. Thomas of Canterbury,*

From all Heresies and Schisms. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From Gluttony and Drunkenness. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From the Prophanation of thy Holy Name, in Cursing and Swearing. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From all kind of Prodigality and Sensuality. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From Oppression, Frauds, and all kinds of Injustice. R. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From the Spirit of Faction, of Malice, Hatred, and of all kind of Uncharitableness. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

From all Vice and Error. *Deliver this Nation, O Lord.*

O God, thou hast been a Father to this Nation, and replenished it with many Blessings.

R. *Forsake it not now, we beseech thee, and give it not up to a reprobate Sense.*

Bless this People, O Lord, and be thou their Inheritance.

R. *And sanctify us, and make us a Holy Nation.*

Give to all its Inhabitants, O Lord, the Spirit of the Gospel. R. *Amen.*

Give them a Zeal for Unity, Peace and Truth. R. *Amen.*

Grant

Grant they may all seek the Things that are above, and walk by the Spirit of Christ. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all who are in Error may by thy Heavenly Light be led into thy Truth. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all Sinners may be truly converted, and forsaking their evil Ways return to thee their God. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all Scandals may be removed. R. *Amen.*

Grant that the Pastors may become the Light of the World. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all Magistrates may administer Justice. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all of the best Ranks may esteem Virtue their greatest Honour, and be ashamed of Vice. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all Youth may be reclaimed from their evil Ways, and consecrate their First-fruits in the Service of Piety and Religion. R. *Amen.*

Grant that all Obstinacy and Blindness may be removed, and that all may be reformed according to thy Blessed Will, O God. R. *Amen.*

Hear us, O Lord, calling upon thee.

R. *And through the infinite Merits of thy only Son, grant our Petition.*

Lord, hear my Prayer.

And let my Cry come to thee.

Let

Let us pray.

ALmighty and Everlasting God, who hast forsaken many Christian Nations, and in Punishment of their Sins, suffered them to be over-run with Infidelity: Grant, we beseech thee, that the Rigour of these thy Judgments may strike us with a timely Fear, and that in earnest forsaking our evil Ways, we may find Mercy with thee.

Hear us, O God, now imploring thy Goodness on Behalf of this our Nation, and on this Day of thy Holy Martyr shew this Mercy to it, as to touch the Heart of all Sinners, who have forsaken thy Law; give them a true Sense of their unhappy State, and by thy Holy Grace press them on to a sincere Repentance, that returning to thee with all their Hearts, they may turn away all those Judgments so justly provoked against us.

O God, how long wilt thou be angry with this Nation? How long will thy Indignation be moved against it? Remember, we beseech thee, thy ancient Mercies, and for the Sake of so many thy Holy Servants, who here have been faithful to thee, shew now Compassion to us, and let thy former Mercies be again renewed, and let not thy Anger endure for ever.

For

For this End, we beseech thee, open the Eyes of all that are in the Darkness of Error; reclaim all Sinners from their Wickedness, spur on the Slothful, warm the Tepid, and may all be so renewed in the Spirit of their Mind, that becoming new Creatures, they may walk worthy of their Vocation, and be found worthy of that Inheritance which thou hast promised to those that faithfully serve thee.

Give Ear to us, O God, here assembled before thee, humbly prostrate in the Confession of our Unworthiness, and wholly confiding in thy Goodness and Mercy. Hear likewise, O God, all those thy glorious Saints, who having received their Being, and faithfully served thee in this our Isle, are now Glorious with thee in Heaven: Hear them praying for their Country, and let their Intercession prevail, through the Merits of thy only Son, through whom alone all Prayers, whether in Earth or Heaven, can find Acceptance with thee.

O God, for whose Church the glorious Prelate *Thomas* fell by the Hands of wicked Men: Grant, we beseech thee, that all, who desire his Assistance, may find Comfort in the Grant of their Petitions. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Tom. I.

E

Sunday

For

Sunday within the Octave of Christmas.

THIS Sunday belonging to the great Solemnity of our Lord's Nativity, we ought on this Day to renew the Memory of this great Mercy of God to Man, in sending his only Son into the World for our Redemption. Let us therefore now bow down, in Acknowledgment of this Mystery; let us praise and adore the Goodness of God, who was thus merciful to us; let us pay the best Homage of Thanks we are able; and now in the Song of the Three Children call in all Creatures to join with us in the Glory we give to God.

All ye Works of our Lord, bless our Lord: Praise and magnify him for ever.

O you Angels of our Lord, bless our Lord: O you Heavens, bless our Lord.

All you Waters, that are above the Firmament, bless our Lord: All you Powers of our Lord, bless our Lord.

Sun and Moon, bless our Lord: Stars of Heaven, bless our Lord.

Showers and Dew, bless our Lord: All you Spirits of God, bless our Lord.

Fire and Heat, bless our Lord: Cold and Summer, bless our Lord.

Dev

Dews and hoary Frost, bless our Lord :
Frost and Cold, bless our Lord.

Ice and Snow, bless our Lord : Nights
and Days, bless our Lord.

Light and Darkneſs, bleſs our Lord :
Lightning and Clouds, bleſs our Lord.

Let the Earth bleſs our Lord : Let it
praiſe and magnify him for ever.

Mountains and Hills, bleſs our Lord : All
Things that ſpring in the Earth, bleſs ye
our Lord.

Bleſs our Lord, you Fountains : Seas and
Rivers, bleſs ye our Lord.

Whales, and all that move in the Wa-
ters, bleſs ye our Lord : All you Fowls of
the Air, bleſs our Lord.

Bleſs our Lord, all Beasts and Cattle :
Sons of Men, bleſs our Lord.

Let *Iſrael* bleſs our Lord : Let it praiſe
and magnify him for ever.

O you Priests of our Lord, bleſs our
Lord : Servants of our Lord, bleſs you our
Lord.

O you Spirits and Souls of the Juſt, bleſs
our Lord : You Holy and Humble of Heart,
bleſs our Lord.

Ananias, Azarias, Miſael, bleſs you
our Lord : Praiſe and magnify him for
ever.

Let us bleſs the Father and the Son,
with the Holy Ghoſt : Let us praiſe and
magnify him for ever.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the Firmament of Heaven: And praised, and glorious, and magnified for ever.

Blessed be the Lord God of *Israel*.

R. *Who has visited and redeemed his People.*

Let us pray.

GRant, O Merciful Father, that we who come here to acknowledge the Infinite Mercy of our Redemption, may praise thee, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, so as now to live not to ourselves, but to him by whose Blood we are purchased: Who with thee and the Holy Ghost Lives and Reigns, One God, World without End. *Amen.*

Being informed in this Day's Gospel, that, according to Simeon's Prophecy, Christ, who came for the Salvation of the World, shall be for the Fall and Rise of many; not only for the Resurrection, but the Ruin of great Numbers; let us now pray to Almighty God, that we may make a good Use of his Mercies, and in the Author of Life find Life, and not Death.

Behold, O God, we confess here before thee this Day the Truth of this Gospel, that Christ is the Saviour of the World; that he has wrought a plentiful Redemption, so that all through him may have Life, and



and more abundantly have it : And yet such is the Condition of what he has done, that none shall effectually partake of this Life, but only those who having put off the Old Man, put on the New, becoming a New Creature in Jesus Christ : Whilst others, who live according to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption, and who are conformed to the World, shall perish with the World, and have a more terrible Judgment for the Neglect of those Means, which Christ has offered for their Salvation.

This, O God, we confess before thee, and therefore most humbly beseech thee, we may be of the Number of those, to whom Christ will be a Resurrection and Life. For this End we now make it our Petition to thee, that through thy Grace we may be faithful in performing the Conditions on our Part, and not forfeit that Mercy, which he has purchased for us at so dear a Rate.

Grant therefore, O God, that renouncing all worldly Desires, we may live soberly, piously, and justly. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant that, like good Trees, we may bring forth good Fruit. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant we may be dead to Sin, but alive to thee, through Jesus Christ. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant that our old Man may be crucified, that the Body of Sin may be destroyed, and henceforth we serve Sin no more. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant we may in all Things prove what is the good, acceptable, and perfect Will of God. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant that the Life of Jesus may be made manifest in us. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant we may not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Grant we may in all Things be the true Disciples of Jesus. *R. Hear us, O God, and mercifully grant our Petition.*

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and mercifully grant these our Petitions.

R. That observing the Law of Christ, we may be Partakers of the Redemption he has wrought for us.

How unhappy are those Christians, who believing in Christ, make no Benefit of all his Mercies!

R. And

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R. *And thrice unhappy they, who, in the Abuse of these Mercies, shall find their Condemnation!*

O Jesus, have Mercy on us; we beseech thee, through thy blessed Incarnation, let not this be our Judgment.

R. *Be thou our Life; live thou in us, that through thee we may obtain Life everlasting.*

Lord, hear my Prayer.

And let my Cry come to thee.

Let us pray.

SUPPORT us, O God, we beseech thee, against our own Wickedness and Weakness, and mercifully prevent their destructive Effects in our Souls, that having the Faith of a Redeemer, we may not make void in us this infinite Mercy by our Sins.

To thee, O Jesus, we appeal for obtaining what we ask, most humbly imploring thy Grace, that the lively Sense of thy Mercy to us may ever keep us in a due Obedience to thy Law, that confessing thee to be our Saviour, we may seek Salvation through thee.

Hear us, O Blessed Redeemer; and since we are of thy Fold, suffer us not to perish, who have been redeemed by thy precious Blood. Thou hast purchased Life for us; live therefore in us, and be to us a Jesus, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

Being likewise informed in this Day's Gospel, that Christ coming for the Salvation of Man shall be as a Mark, which shall be contradicted, let us confess this to be a great Iniquity in Man, and most humbly beg we may have no Part in it.

We confess it, O God, an Argument of thy infinite Love to Man, to send thy Only Son for our Redemption.

Infinite Love it was, for God to be humbled, and suffer as a Sinner, that we Sinners might be raised to Glory.

Such Love, as ought to oblige us to love thee with all our Hearts.

Such Love, as ought to oblige us to love our Jesus with all our Souls.

Such Love, as ought to oblige us to forsake ourselves, and all Creatures for his Service.

Such Love, as ought to oblige us to suffer all Extremities rather than be faithless to him.

Such Love, as should engage us in all Things to do his Will.

Such Love, as should engage us never to offend him.

This, O blessed Lord, we all here acknowledge: This, O Father of Mercy, we all confess here before thee to be our strictest Duty, such as we are obliged to by all the Ties of Justice, of Gratitude, of Honour, and of our own Interest, to love
our

our Jesus, to serve him, and to suffer all Troubles of this Life rather than sin against him.

R. *This, O God, we all acknowledge : This we all confess to be our strictest Duty.*

What then must it be, for Christians to stand against Jesus, and contradict him ?

R. *This we confess to be a great Impiety.*

What must it be for Christians to forsake his Law, and depart from the Ways of his Gospel ?

R. *This we confess to be a great Iniquity.*

What must it be, for Christians to despise his Law, and for the Sake of Trifles to offend against him ?

R. *This we confess to be the Sin of Perfidiousness.*

What must it be, for Christians to join with the World, with the Flesh, Self-love and the Devil, and set up an Interest quite contrary to him ?

R. *This we confess to be a base Ingratitude and Treachery.*

In this Manner we make our Profession in thy Presence, O God; and since we acknowledge it so very criminal, and even unworthy of the Christian Name, to stand in Opposition against Christ, or to make him the Mark of our Contradiction, after such signal Demonstrations of his Love to us, we (who are here assembled) most humbly

implore thy Grace, that we may never incur this Guilt.

We beseech thee at all Times to stand by us, and so direct us by thy heavenly Light, that having chosen Christ for our Lawgiver and Master, we may be faithful in what we have undertaken, and make his Doctrine the Rule of our Lives.

R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and in thy Mercy grant this our Petition.

We beseech thee likewise, O God, that whenever our Corruption pushes us on to transgress thy Law, or to walk in such Ways as are displeasing to thee, we may resolutely stand against all such Inclinations, and be faithful in following the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and in thy Mercy grant this our Petition.

We beseech thee likewise, O God, that with the same Constancy, we may stand against all the sinful Charms of Flesh and Blood, against all the Flatteries and Terrors of the World, against all the Temptations of the Devil, of Self-love, and our own evil Customs, and in the Midst of all these be faithful Servants of Jesus Christ.

R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and in thy Mercy grant this our Petition.

We beseech thee likewise, O God, that believing Christ to be our Redeemer, we may

may do every Thing agreeable to that Love which he has shewed us, and which in Justice is due from us to him.

R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and in thy Mercy grant this our Petition.

Lord, hear my Prayer.

And let my Cry come to thee.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast shewn an infinite Love to sinful Man, in providing him so plentiful a Redemption, perfect, we beseech thee, this Mercy to us, and by thy Grace defend us from the Blindness of standing against him, who comes not only to seek us, but even to purchase our Peace with the Price of his own Life.

Strengthen us therefore, we beseech thee, under all our Weaknesses, and help us to defeat all the Designs of our Enemy, that amidst all Temptations we may abide faithful to him, to whom we were consecrated in our Baptism.

Almighty and everlasting God, direct our Actions according to thy good Pleasure, that in the Name of thy beloved Son, we may abound in good Works; who lives and reigns with thee in the Unity of the Holy Ghost.

St.

St. Sylvester, December 31.

Luke xii. 35, 40.

WE are now on the Festival of St. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, in the Time of Constantine the Great; and it being in his Time that Peace was first granted to the Church, after a Persecution of three Hundred Years, even from the Time of the Apostles; let us now offer up our Prayers to God, and humbly beseech him to give Peace to his Church now in our Days throughout the World, that Persecution may cease in all Places, and that no civil Power may take from us the Liberty of serving God.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who art the Father of Mercies, and Author of all Blessings; to thee we render Thanks for thy Mercy to the Church in those Primitive Times, in favouring it with the Protection of the temporal Power, and giving to Christians the Liberty of thy publick Service throughout the World.
For

For this thy Mercy, in which we, as well as all past Ages, have a Part.

We now here most humbly bow down before thee, and give thee Thanks.

R. *We praise and glorifie thy Name.*

We desire all Creatures to bless thee.

R. *We desire the Blessed in Heaven to give thee Praise, and Benediction and Glory for ever.*

Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

And Blessed is the Name of thy Glory, which is Holy; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou in the Holy Temple of thy Glory; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou upon the Sacred Throne of thy Kingdom; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou on the Sceptre of thy Divinity; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou, who sittest on the Cherubins beholding the Depths; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou who walkest upon the Wings of the Wind, and on the Waves of the Sea; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Let

110 St. Sylvester, Dec. 31.

Let all thy Angels and Saints bless thee; and may they Praise and Glorify thee for ever.

Let the Heavens Bless thee, the Earth and Sea, and all that is in them; and let them Praise and Glorify thee for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; and to him worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

As it was in the beginning, both now and ever, World without End. *Amen.* And to him worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, God of our Fathers; and worthy of Praise and Glory for ever.

Lord, hear my Prayer.

And let my Cry come to thee.

Let us pray.

TO thee, O Eternal Father, we render Thanks for this Mercy, in restoring Peace to thy Church; and we humbly beseech thee, that the Fruit of this Blessing may be the Encrease of thy Glory, in the Holy Lives of all those who partake of this Peace, and by it have the Benefit of knowing and serving thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son, who lives and reigns with thee.

But

But since all Christians have not an equal Share in this Blessing, we now implore thy Mercy in Behalf of those Nations, where thy Church is at this Day under any Degree of Oppression or Persecution; beseeching thee to have Compassion on them, and to incline them to shew Favour to thy Truths, and to the Professors of them.

O God, have Mercy on thy Church, in whatever Nation of the Earth it is planted. R. *We beseech thee, O God, have Mercy on it.*

O God, deliver thy Church from all Persecution, Oppression, and Restraint. R. *We beseech thee, O God, deliver it.*

O God, deliver thy Church from all Laws and Penalties, which are not the Punishment of Sin, but for the Suppression of thy Worship and Truth. R. *We beseech thee, O God, deliver it.*

O God, incline all Christian Magistrates to such a Love of Justice, that while they are severe against Vice, they may shew Favour to what deserves it. R. *We beseech thee, O God, incline them to it.*

O God, shew this Mercy to thy Church, that its Members may not suffer as the Abettors of such evil Principles and Practices, as they detest from their
Hearts.

Hearten. R. *We beseech thee, O God, shew this Mercy to thy Church.*

O God, have Compassion on us, remove thy Judgments from us, and be not angry with us for ever. R. *We beseech thee, O God, have Compassion on us, remove thy Judgment, and be not angry with us for ever.*

O God, give us Grace to reform our Lives, that thy Goodness being inclined to our Relief, we may be delivered from all Fears, and serve thee in Holiness and Justice all our Days. R. *We beseech thee, O God, grant us this Grace.*

O God, we beseech thee, that while we are under the Scourge of thy Judgments, we may live like true Penitents, humbled under the Sense of our Offences, and the Weight of thy Hand. R. *We beseech thee, O God, grant us this Grace.*

O God, grant us thy Grace, that while we suffer for our Iniquities, we may not live on like Reprobates, hardened in Sin, and by new Extravagances encrease thy Anger against us. R. *We beseech thee, O God, grant us this Grace.*

Look down, O God, we beseech thee, upon an afflicted People, and grant us, if it be thy blessed Will, the Mercy of Peace. We can pretend to no Favours, since our unreform'd Lives plead against us: But, O God, since our Hope is in thee, let us find Help from thee: Thy Goodness will be

be more adorable in the Relief of those, who are unworthy of what they ask.

Despise not, we beseech thee, the Cries of Sinners: Behold we confess our Iniquities before thee, and acknowledge these to have been so provoking in us, while under the Execution of thy Justice, that we must own it thy Mercy, that there is any Branch left which is not cut off. For this Mercy, O God, we bless thy Name; and from this have we Encouragement to make our Petitions to thee. Hear us therefore, we beseech thee; and since we ask for nothing but what is for the Glory of thy Name, let not our Unworthiness be an Exception against us; grant for thy own Sake what ought to be denied for ours. Grant us Peace, that thy Name may be Glorified, though we deserve it not.

At least, O God, though our Sins are great, yet so far have Compassion on us as not to take from us the little Opportunities we have of serving thee. This we may justly fear, if we consider the Rigour of thy Judgment, and the Greatness of our Iniquities: But have Compassion, O Father of Mercy, and spare the Remnant that is yet left.

For this End hear us now, we beseech thee, and since we appeal to the Bowels of thy most tender Mercies, favourably incline to us, and grant what we ask.

Grant,

Grant, O God, that we may make a good Use of whatever Conveniences we have of serving thee. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That in thy solemn Worship all may behave themselves, both Pastors and People, with that true Piety and solid Devotion, as becomes thy Infinite Majesty. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That in all Publick Assemblies thy Faithful may be afraid of provoking thee by any kind of Indecency or Irreverence. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That thy Faithful may amend all their evil Ways, and no more join in those Extravagances that are so displeasing to thee. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That considering the Weight of thy Scourge, they may fear thy Wrath, and in the Spirit of true Penance, take such Methods as may be most effectual for moving thee to Compassion. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and let thy Heavenly Grace put a Stop to all those Evils by which thy Anger has been rais'd against us. Suffer us no longer to provoke thy Displeasure, who so much stand in Need of thy Mercy. Be a God to us, be a Father to us, and having pardon'd our past Sins, preserve us from all Return of our Iniquities; that being truly converted, we
may

may have thee our Protector, and find the Effects of thy Mercies in the Encrease of thy Blessings. Save us, O Lord, or we perish.

This being the last Day of the Year, it is most Just and Reasonable we should give Thanks to Almighty God for all the Blessings of this Year, whether Spiritual or Temporal, which the divine Bounty has bestowed upon us.

Before thee therefore, O Almighty God, we bow down, and here, with all the Sincerity of our Hearts, acknowledge all the Blessings we have received, to have been the Effect of thy Goodness. To thee be the Praise of all; may all redound to thy Glory; and graciously accept the Homage of Thanksgiving we now pay to thee.

For all thy Preservations this Year, both of Soul and Body. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For the merciful Deliverance from all Dangers, to which we have been expos'd. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For all the Effects of thy Providence, in bountifully supplying us with all Necessaries. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For all the Helps, Comforts, and Assistance, with which thou hast mercifully provided us this Year, under all our Troubles, Wants, and Necessities. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For all the Trials of Pain, Sicknes, Losses,

ses, or other Afflictions, with which thou hast been pleased to visit us. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For all the interior Lights, Graces, and Comforts, with which thou hast been pleased to Revive, Enlighten, or Refresh our Souls. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For mercifully preserving us from many Sins, into which others have unhappily fall'n. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For not snatching us out of this World in the Midst of our Sins, but giving us still Time to Repent. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee O God.*

For all other Graces and Blessings unknown to us, which we have received from thy Fatherly Hand. *R. Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

Accept this our Homage of Thanksgiving, O Lord, we beseech thee; and mercifully grant, that whatever Blessings we have received from thee, may be all improved to the Glory of the Giver.

May the grateful Memory of thy infinite Favours so possess our Hearts with a lively Sense of Duty, that we may sincerely love thee, and faithfully serve thee, and be confounded at the Thought of whatever can be displeasing to thee.

Grant we may no more abuse thy Blessings

sings to the Encrease of our Sin, but that, seriously considering the End for which they were given, we may turn them all that Way, and thus be always prepared for that Day, when thou shalt call us to give an Account of what we have received. Grant this, O merciful God, that so the ill Use of thy Favours may not be our Condemnation.

This Day being the Conclusion of the Year, we ought not to depart from our Prayers till we have humbled ourselves in the Sight of God, and beg'd Pardon for all the Sins of this whole Year.

O God, who in thy Mercy hast spar'd our Lives this Year, and in this Addition of our Days given us Time to Repent; Grant we may have a true Sense of this Mercy, and by a true Repentance now make our Peace with thee.

For this End, behold, O God, we at this Moment lay all our Iniquities before thee; we acknowledge our great Unworthiness in them; in our Disobedience to thee our loving Father; in our Ingratitude to thee our merciful Benefactor; in our vile Contempt of thy Law, and Rebellion against thee, our Sovereign Lord and our God.

This, O God, we cannot now reflect on without Shame and Confusion to our own Souls; and 'tis in this Confusion we now send up our Sighs before thee, imploring thy Mercy to have Compassion on us, and to forgive us all our Iniquities. We
are

are unworthy of what we ask, and deserve with the severest of thy Judgment to be cast from before thy Face : But, O God, deal not with us according to thy Justice, but according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies.

Remember the Promises thou hast made to Repenting Sinners, and forget not thy Holy Covenant. Look upon the Face of thy Christ, and through the Merits of his Sacred Passion let thy Bowels be mov'd upon us. We are thy Creatures, and though we have unworthily departed from thee, yet behold now we return, and most humbly beseech thee to receive us again into thy Favour. Hear our Prayers, O Father of Mercy, and graciously vouchsafe to grant our Petition ; let this Day be a Day of Comfort to us, and may our Contrition be so sincere as to find Mercy with thee, and obtain Pardon of all our Sins. Grant this, O God, and now shew thyself a loving Father to us. *Amen.*

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that this Holy Festival of Blessed *Sylvester*, Confessor and Bishop, may be to us the Increase of Devotion, and a Help to Salvation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

The

*The Circumcision of our Lord, or
New-Year's Day.*

Luke ii. 21.

THIS being the Day whereon our Redeemer was pleased to subject himself to the Law of Circumcision, let us give him Thanks, and beg that this Day we may learn the Lesson he teaches us, in the Circumcision of our Heart.

Let us pray.

TO thee, O Jesus, we bow down, and with grateful Acknowledgments give thee Thanks for the Mercy of this Day, in humbling thyself to this Law of Sin ; so to give Proof of thy being of the Seed of *Abraham*, and putting an End to this Ceremony, to establish a much better Circumcision, which is that of the Heart.

Thanks be to thee, O Jesus, who thus early beginnest to become our Sacrifice : Thou art no sooner Born but thou undertakest to suffer, and in this teacheest us what our Life ought to be. Give us, we beseech thee, a Docil Heart, that we may learn the Spiritual Circumcision, and on this First Day of the New Year, begin to put on the
New

120 *The Circumcision of our Lord,*
New Man, which is created according to
God.

We confess, O Lord, the Lesson to be
hard to us, where so much of Corruption
and Self-love prevails. These strongly in-
cline us to seek ourselves in every thing that
pleases; but now, O Blessed Redeemer, up-
on thy Example and Instruction, we be-
seech thee to give us that Solid Faith, and
Inward Strength of Mind, as to overcome
ourselves, and follow on in the Way where
thou leadeest, even the Way of Circumcision,
which arms the Spirit against the Flesh,
and cuts of whatever Inclinations or De-
sires are not agreeable to thy Spirit.

This we ask of thee, because it is this
thou teachest, and we know it now to be
contrary both to thy Doctrine and Life,
and to the Life of all thy Saints, to follow
Nature, and to seek the Pleasures, Satis-
factions and Ease of this World.

Grant therefore, O Divine Guide, we
may, on this Day, with Seriousness ex-
amine all our Ways, and resolving to live
by thy Spirit, and not our own, begin to
cut off all the Excesses to which our own
Spirit leads us.

Grant we may carefully cut off all Sinful
and Dangerous Satisfactions, whatever they
be, whether great or little. *R. Hear us, O
Blessed Redeemer, and mercifully grant this
our Petition.*

Grant

Grant that in Things lawful we may ever stand upon our Guard, and even here practise some Self-denials; especially where we observe our Satisfaction incline to Excess. R. *Hear us, O blessed Redeemer, and mercifully grant this our Petition.*

Grant that in all those Actions of Life which being agreeable to Nature are attended with Delight, we may raise our Heart above Nature, and not perform them because they are pleasing to us, but because they are according to thy holy Will. R. *Hear us, O Blessed Redeemer, and mercifully grant this our Petition.*

Hear, us O merciful Lord, and may the Grant of these our Requests be the Fruit of this Festival. With this new Grace for the Practice of a spiritual Circumcision may we begin the New-Year, and preserve it in our Hearts for the Rule of our Lives; and as often as we find Difficulty in the Practice of it, let us then remember that the Way of Salvation is a Way of Difficulty, even a narrow Way; and that since thou, O Jesus, didst not become a Saviour to us, but at the Price of thy Blood, we cannot think of following thee at our Ease, or of being saved without some Trouble. Grant us this Petition, O most gracious Saviour of Mankind, and according to the Great-

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Grant

122 *The Circumcision of our Lord,*

ness of thy Mercy so now vouchsafe to hear our Prayer, and teach us to live according to thy Spirit.

It being on this Day of the Circumcision, the Name of Jesus was given to our New-born Saviour; let us bow down and adore him under this Name, and address our Petitions to him.

Before thee, O Jesus, we bow down and confess the Greatness, and Glory, and Mercy of this Name; a Name in which all are to be Blessed; a Name in which all are to be Saved; a Name which ought to be Glorified by all thy Creatures, but above all, by those who have been Redeemed by thee.

O Jesus, Blessed for evermore, may the Cherubims adore thee.

R. May the Seraphims praise thee.

May the Angels bless thee.

May all the Choirs and blessed Spirits of Heaven magnify thy holy Name.

May the Priests of our Lord glorify thee.

R. May all the Kings of the Earth bow down before thee.

May all pious Souls acknowledge thy magnificent Glory.

R. May all Men and Women, Old and Young, Rich and Poor, sing Praises to thee.

May the Sun, Moon and Stars, confess thy Power.

R. May

*R. May all living Creatures pay thee
Homage, and the infernal Spirits tremble at
thy Name.*

Thus, O Jesus, we desire that at thy
Name every Knee should bow, of Things
in Heaven, of Things in Earth, and of
Things that are under the Earth. Thou
art the Lord of all, and 'tis just thy Power
and thy Mercy should be acknowledged by
all. But chiefly this is to be confessed by
us Sinners, for whose Sake thou hast hum-
bled thyself in becoming Man, and taken
upon thee this Name for our Salvation.
Therefore humbling ourselves before thee,
we beseech thee so to possess us with thy
holy Grace, that our whole Lives may be
subject to thee, and that, with all the Fa-
culties of our Souls and Bodies, we may
confess thee to be our Lord, our Redeemer,
and our Jesus, both now and for ever.

May our Understandings adore thee, in
receiving what thou teachest, and peaceably
bearing whatever Darkness is the Punish-
ment of this our mortal and sinful State.
Amen.

May our Wills adore thee, in readily
submitting to thy Law, and cheerfully
denying themselves in all Inclinations that
are not approved by thee. *R. Amen.*

May all our Affections adore thee, in
keeping within the Bounds thou hast set
them; in carrying our Hearts to thee with

124. *The Circumcision of our Lord,*

Desire and Love; in carefully declining all that is sinful, and being ever fearful of all Excess. R. *Amen.*

May all our Passions adore thee, in acknowledging Obedience to thy holy Will, and ever taking the Check, when through Blindness or Heat they are bent upon any Thing that is Sinful, Rash, or Indiscreet. R. *Amen.*

May our Thoughts adore thee, and all our Senses, our Eyes, our Ears, our Hands, our Tongue, all confess thee to be their God, in concurring to thy Glory, in being regulated by thy Law, and taking no farther Liberties than what thou hast allowed them. R. *Amen.*

Hear us, O Jesus, in these our Petitions, and since thou comest to be our Saviour, perform now to us what thou hast undertaken: Grant us what we ask, since without this Government of ourselves, in a due Obedience to thy holy Will, we are still in Slavery, and can have no Benefit of thy Coming.

Be merciful to us, and help us, for otherwise we are miserable. Our Dependance is on thee, and without thee we can do nothing, without thee we can obtain nothing. This, O God, we confess from our Hearts before the whole World; and that we may now have a Part in thy Protection, behold, in honour of thy Holy Name,

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Name, we raise both our Hearts and Voices to thee, and implore thy Mercy in our Behalf.

Lord, have Mercy on us.
 Christ, have Mercy on us.
 Lord, have Mercy on us.
 Jesus, Son of the living God,
 Jesus, most Powerful,
 Jesus, most Strong,
 Jesus, most Perfect,
 Jesus, most Glorious,
 Jesus, most Admired,
 Jesus, most Pleasant,
 Jesus, most Beloved,
 Jesus, Clearer than the Sun,
 Jesus, Fairer than the Moon,
 Jesus, Brighter than the Stars,
 Jesus, most Admirable,
 Jesus, most Delectable,
 Jesus, most Honourable,
 Jesus, most Humble,
 Jesus, most Meek,
 Jesus, most Patient,
 Jesus, most Obedient,
 Jesus, most Chaste,
 Jesus, the Lover of Chastity,
 Jesus, the Lover of Peace,
 Jesus, our Love,
 Jesus, the Mirrour of Life,
 Jesus, the Pattern of Virtues,
 Jesus, the Ornament of good Discipline,

Have Mercy on us.

126 *The Circumcision of our Lord,*

Jesus, the zealous Lover of Souls,
Jesus, our Refuge,
Jesus, Father of the Poor,
Jesus, Comforter of the Afflicted,
Jesus, Treasurer of the Faithful,
Jesus, the precious Pearl,
Jesus, the Treasurer of Perfection,
Jesus, the good Shepherd,
Jesus, Star of the Sea,
Jesus, the true Light,
Jesus, the eternal Wisdom,
Jesus, infinite Goodness,
Jesus, the Joy of Angels,
Jesus, King of Patriarchs,
Jesus, Inspirer of the Prophets,
Jesus, Master of the Apostles,
Jesus, Teacher of the Evangelists,
Jesus, the Strength of Martyrs,
Jesus, the Light of Confessors,
Jesus, the Spouse of Virgins,
Jesus, the Crown of all Saints,

Have Mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the
Sins of the World. R. *O Jesus, spare*
us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the
Sins of the World. R. *O Jesus, hear*
us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the
Sins of the World. R. *O Jesus, have*
Mercy on us.

Jesus Christ, hear us.

Jesus Christ, graciously hear us.

The

or, New-Year's Day. 127

The Name of our Lord be Blessed.

R. *From this Time, now, and for ever.*

Let us pray.

O God, who hast render'd the most glorious Name of thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, worthy to be loved with highest Affection by thy Faithful, and most dreadful to evil Spirits: Mercifully grant that all who devoutly Honour this Name of Jesus on Earth, may at present be refreshed with the Sweetness of divine Comforts, and hereafter come to the Possession of everlasting Joys. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

This being the Day of the Holy Name of Jesus, let us humble ourselves, and beg Pardon for the many Times we have prophaned this Holy Name, and ask for Grace to amend this Ill Custom, and that, for the Time to come, we may never speak it but with the Reverence that is due.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast given a strict Command to thy People not to take thy Name in vain; have Mercy on us thy Servants, who here confess our Unworthiness before thee, and especially in the frequent Transgression of this thy Precept. For

behold.

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Have Mercy on us.

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128 *The Circumcision of our Lord,*

behold, O God, we acknowledge it our too common Failing to think little of the Respect that is due to thy Holy Name, and to the Name of Blessed Jesus our Redeemer; we very often prophane them both, prostitute them to Common Uses, and make them serve both our Passions, our Entertainments, and our Smiles.

And how great, O God, is our Neglect, our Contempt, our Irreligion, in abusing what is thus Holy; in having thy positive Command, and yet living in the daily Transgression of it, with very little Endeavours, or even Concern for doing better! This we confess is not the Part of Christians; it is not the Spirit of thy Children, and yet this is what we profess.

Pardon us therefore, we beseech thee, O most Gracious Lord, and mercifully release us from the Guilt of whatever we have hitherto offended thee in this kind. Forgive us the many, if not infinite Times, we have taken thy holy Name in vain; and if our Guilt has been in any scandalous Way, yet still, O God, let us not be excluded from thy Mercy.

But then, O Blessed Lord, let this Mercy be attended with such Grace as to make us both Zealous and Watchful in overcoming ourselves in whatever Part we have of this Ill-Custom. Let us no more
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run on in a heedless Way, nor be surprized in our usual Irreverence, for want of Care. Let us be ashamed of such Neglect, and now on this Day of thy Holy Name, O Jesus, begin to be more Careful. Grant this, O Jesus, and with this Care may we begin the New-Year, and no more bring thy Sacred Name into Contempt, while we make Profession of honouring thee, and being thy Disciples.

It being the first Day of the Year, let us recommend ourselves to the Protection of Almighty God, and beg his Assistance on us and ours for this whole Year.

O God, who hast spared our Lives, and brought us to the Beginning of this Year, to thee we Consecrate the Being thou hast granted to us ; from our Hearts desiring that what is thy Gift to us thy unworthy Servants, may by us be employed to thy Glory.

But since we cannot do this but with the Addition of thy Gifts, therefore we most earnestly beseech thee, O God, so to strengthen us by thy Heavenly Grace, that we may be truly watchful over all our Ways, avoid all that are sinful, and follow none but what are good. For this End, O Merciful Father, shew thy Mercy to us, and preserve us from all the Snares of the World, of the Devil, and of our own Corruption ; leave us not to ourselves, but

130 *The Circumcision of our Lord,*

ever accompany us in all our Ways, in our Prayers, in our Business, in our Troubles, in Temptations, in Time of Pain or Sickness, in all Difficulties and Circumstances of Life. In all these, O God, be thou our Helper, our Counsel and our Guide, and let no Evil Spirit prevail against us to thy Displeasure.

Preserve us likewise, O God, from all Dangers and Misfortunes; and if thou shalt permit any for our Trial, let us not fail, we beseech thee, of thy Grace, such as may carry us through them with the Patience of thy Disciples.

Help us throughout this Year, in the Performance of every Duty belonging to our State, that we may do no Wrong to any, but perform all to thy Glory. Help us in the good Government of ourselves, that we may not be blinded by any Passion, but making thy Holy Will our Rule, may follow on where this leads us, and faithfully resist whatever attempts to draw us from it.

Thus, O God, may we go on this Year, observing all thy Laws, and walking in all thy Precepts; and this one Thing we ask of thee, that we may make such a good Use of this Addition of Days which thou grantest us, as to improve in the Love and Service of thee our God, and be prepared for a happy Death, if this be the
Year

or, New-Year's Day: 131

Year which is to be our last. Thus, O God, we offer ourselves to thee, commending ourselves to thy Protection, and begging thy Blessing for the good Beginning of this Year.

Let us pray.

O God, who, by the Fruitful Virginity of Blessed *Mary*, hast given to Mankind the Reward of Eternal Salvation; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may find the Effect of her Prayers for us, by whom we have received the Author of Life, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Vigil of the Epiphany.

Matt. ii. 19, 23.

THE Subject of this Gospel is of the Angel appearing to St. Joseph in Egypt, and commanding him to take the Infant Jesus and his Mother, and to return into the Land of Israel. And while we see Jesus thus depending on Heaven, as not to move without particular Orders from God, let us beg this Day, that we likewise may have the same De-

132 Vigil of the Epiphany.

*Dependance, and not undertake any Thing,
but as the Will of God shall direct us.*

Let us pray.

O Word Incarnate, we here acknowledge and adore thy humble Dependance, who being the Incrated Wisdom and Light Eternal, art yet so directed by thy Father's Orders, as if thou hadst no Knowledge or Foresight of thy own, whereon to depend.

For being thus docil and submissive, as an helpless Infant, O Divine Jesus, we bow down and adore thee, and most humbly beseech thee to teach us this depending Lesson, that we, who are nothing but Darknes, may wait in all Things upon the Orders of Heaven, according to the Example thou hast given us, who art the Light of the World.

Thus, O Blessed Redeemer, we have great Reason to ask, because of ourselves we are so very blind, and yet so very rash. We see nothing before us, we know not what will be the Consequence of our own Desires; and yet, O God, how eager are we in desiring, how bold in undertaking, as if we were privy to all thy Counsels, and had a Prospect of all that is to come, wherein we are concerned!

Hence

Vigil of the Epiphany. 133

Hence (we confess) we need no other Contrivers of our own Ruin, than our own Wishes ; and the Grant of our very Prayers is often a Judgment upon us, because we know not what we ask.

Wherefore, O Jesus, we beseech thee, to take from us all Confidence in ourselves, give us a Distrust of our own Thoughts, and teach us by thy own Example entirely to depend on Heaven. Let us no more trust to a broken Reed, nor take a blind Guide to lead us ; but being convinced of these being the Way to Ruin, may we place our whole Confidence in thee.

Settle now this Principle in us, That we can do nothing well but under thy Conduct : That no Resolution can be for our Good but what thou inspirest : That there can be nothing done wisely, but where thy Holy Will is consulted to determine the Choice.

Upon this Conviction may we from this Time make it our constant Practice, in all Proposals, to consult thy Holy Will, and never to undertake any thing, either of the next Life or this, till we have first seriously examined how far it is approved by thee.

According to this Method may we still, O God, be solicitous for thy Direction in all our Ways ; no more trust to Human
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134 Vigil of the Epiphany.

Encouragements, nor take present Conveniences, or the Bent of Inclination, to shew us our Way.

No, Blessed Lord, we know these to be deceitful Guides; we know there are Ways which seem right to a Man, and yet lead to Destruction. Teach us therefore, O God, to be wise; no more to trust to what has already very often deceived us.

But since thou art the only Way, and all, without thee, is Errour; since thou art the only Light, and all, without thee, is Darknes; since thou art the only Wisdom, and all, without thee, is Folly; may we seek for no other Way, no other Light, no other Wisdom, but what is from thee.

O God! how secure and full of Comfort should we walk, could we confirm our Minds against the Force of Human Motives, and obtain what we now ask, of depending wholly on thy Will! How might we then go on with a certain inward Peace, and not be touched either with the Smiles or Reproaches of a busy and censorious World! How might we then find Content amidst the severest Storms, whilst we should have still this Assurance to support us, that we have thy Will to direct us in the Way in which we go, and

and meet with no Opposition, but what is likewise according to thy Will!

This would be a solid Comfort, such as must be the Foundation both of a Temporal and Eternal Peace. But now as it is with us, how far are we from this Way of Peace; when, upon examining our Steps, we easily discover, that not thou, O God, to whom all Things ought to be subject, but some Infirmary, Corruption or Vice, has the Direction of them!

This is what we ought to be ashamed of, as unworthy of our Profession, and yet 'tis a Truth we cannot but own before thee; we cannot but own that our Desires are often very pressing, and we are bent with Earnestness upon pursuing what we thus propose to ourselves as good: And what is it that raises and quickens this Motion in us? We wish we could say with Truth, It is only thy Will, O God, and the Sollicitude for executing thy Commands.

But when they come to be examined, what is there appears? What, O God, but Weakness, Confusion, and Sin! Sometimes Nature stands at the Wheel, and gives the whole Motion, and there is nothing in all our Desires but an Eagerness of satisfying our own Inclination. Sometimes Interest is at the Bottom, and gives all the Heat; sometimes Vanity, some-
times

136 Vigil of the Epiphany.

times the World, and how often the Devil!

Thus it is too often in all the other Motions of our Souls; we are variously affected in the Day; sometimes we are pleased, sometimes displeased; sometimes we love, sometimes we hate; sometimes we enjoy a Calm, and soon a Storm succeeds; sometimes we will, and then again we will not; thus Variety of Motions every Day succeed: And what is it that moves us?

Oh! that we could say, It is only thou and thy Holy Will, O God! But this we cannot say. For how often is it, that there is nothing more than Humour, nothing but some Passion that move the whole Machine, without any Concern or Reflection of what is thy good Pleasure in us!

And what a comfortless Reflection now, O God, is this, to find, upon Enquiry, that whereas thou only shouldest have the whole Guidance of our Souls, we are so blind and perverse, as to withdraw ourselves from thy Conduct, and not to let thee have scarce a small Share in it!

O God, we confess this to be our great Mercy, that believing thee to be our God, we subject ourselves to every thing more than to thee. We let the World govern us, Inclination leads us, Imagination pushes

us

Vigil of the Epiphany. 137

us on, Passion hurries us, Company move us, Interest draws, Pleasure commands us, and Strength of Humour or Fancy is enough to put us upon a Thousand Projects. Thus, O God, we set up to ourselves a Thousand Idols, and so far serve them, as to obey their Commands; and this while we say, that thou art our God.

O most gracious Lord, this is our Unhappiness, for which we now make Complaint against ourselves, and become Petitioners to thee, for Remedy. Hear us, we beseech thee, and be favourable to our Requests. Forsake us not under this our Weakness, but while we here stand exposed to so many Snares, while on all Occasions we have very many Evils that offer to advise and direct us, many that solicit and importune us, many that with a sort of Violence offer to command us, shew Mercy to us in these our unhappy Circumstances, and give us such Grace, Discretion and Strength, as may be our Security against the Dangers of being led out of the Way.

Give us Grace never rashly to embrace any Proposals that are made to us, but first seriously to examine how far they are agreeable to thy holy Will. Give us Discretion to discern all such evil Motions as are disguised under the Appearance of being innocent

138 Vigil of the Epiphany.

innocent and good. Give us Strength to stand against all those flattering Evils, which having our own Corruption confederate with them, expose us to the greater Danger of being betrayed into Sin.

Help us, O Blessed Lord, in these Particulars, and thus mercifully prepare our Souls to stand secure against all Deceits, that we may not be misled by evil Counsellors, nor drawn into Sin. We acknowledge the Danger in which we daily are, and that we can have no Security but from thy Direction; because thou art our only Guide to Salvation; thou art the only Light, which shews us a safe Way amidst the many Snares that are before us.

Be therefore a Guide, and a continual Light to us; be thou our Adviser and Director in all Things; secure us, we beseech thee, against the World; secure us against ourselves; because our Danger is great on all Sides, and we are too easy in giving Ear to those, who design nothing but our Ruin.

Particularly we ask that Favour of thee which thou shewedst to St. *Joseph*. He had the Care of Jesus, and thou wast always so merciful as to direct him how to escape the Enemies of Jesus, and to decline those who designed to destroy him.

This same Mercy we ask of thee, O God, in our Behalf; for we also have the
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Vigil of the Epiphany. 139

Care of Jesus. He has entrusted himself with us, and we have many Enemies, who are ever watching to rob us of this Treasure. But here, O Merciful Father, be thou our Guide, and by thy Heavenly Light shew us, how to avoid all such Enemies. Deliver us from the Rashness of voluntarily exposing ourselves to the Danger of them; and whenever they make their Attempts upon us, then be thou with us, O God, and either give us Strength to stand against them, or Resolution of flying into a Thousand *Egypt*s, rather than hazard the Loss of Jesus.

Hear us, O God, in this Petition.

R. And mercifully grant our Prayer.

That Jesus may never be taken from us.

R. That Jesus may abide with us for ever.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, direct all our Actions according to thy good Will, that in the Name of thy beloved Son we may abound in good Works; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity.

Epiphany.

Epiphany.

Matt. ii. 1, 12.

THIS being the Festival of the Epiphany, a Memorial of that Day, when the wise Men having been called out of the East, by the Appearance of an unusual Star, were by the same led to Bethlehem, where in the Stable they adored their New-Born Saviour; let us give Thanks to Almighty God for his Mercy in calling the Gentiles to the Knowledge of Christ: We are a Part of the Gentiles, of whom these were the First-fruit, and therefore Thanks are on this Day due from us.

Let us pray.

WE come this Day before thee, O God, to acknowledge thy infinite Mercy to us. We were a Part of the Gentiles, a Part of those unhappy Wretches who worshipped the Work of Mens Hands, and had no Knowledge of their God.

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This was our unhappy State; but thou hadst Compassion on our Darkness, when by a miraculous Light thou didst awaken the Faith of these wise Men, and bringing them to a Confession of Christ, didst begin to manifest thy Mercy to the Gentiles, and in these didst open a Gate to all others to come into the Fold of Christ, to become his Members, and partake of the Redemption wrought by him.

The Call therefore of these great Converts was a Blessing prepared for us.

For this, O God, we praise thee.

R. We desire all Creatures may bleſs thy Name.

For that thou haſt called us out of Darkneſs into thy wonderful Light.

R. And haſt brought us to the Knowledge of our Redeemer.

That through him we may be taught thy Ways.

R. That through him we may be delivered from the Wrath to come.

That through him we may obtain Pardon of our Sins.

R. That with him we may be made Heirs of eternal Glory.

For this thy Mercy we deſire all the Gentiles may rejoice, adore, and give thee Thanks.

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This

All you Nations, clap your Hands ; with Jubilee and Exclamations of Joy, give Praise to God.

All ye People of the Earth, praise God with loud Voices, sing a Psalm to his Name, and magnify his Glory.

Sing to our Lord a new Hymn, for he has done wonderful Things.

We are saved by the Might of his Right Hand, and by the Strength of his Holy Arm.

Our Lord has made known his saving Power ; in the Sight of the Nations he has manifested his Justice.

He has remember'd his Mercies, and the making good his Promises to the House of *Israel*.

The whole Earth has seen the saving Mercy of our God.

Joyfully sing, all ye Inhabitants of the Earth, the Praises of God : Sing and be transported with Joy.

Sound forth your Joy in the Presence of our Lord, our King : Let the Sea rejoice, and all it contains, and the whole World with the Inhabitants thereof.

The Rivers will join their Applauses, and the Mountains will shew their Joy at the Sight of our Lord, because he comes to judge the Earth.

He will judge the Earth according to Justice, and the People thereof with Equity.

All the Nations whom thou hast made shall come and adore thee, O Lord, and give Glory to thy Name.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without End. Amen.

Let us pray.

ACcept, O Lord, we beseech thee, this Homage of Praise, in Acknowledgment of this thy infinite Goodness; and mercifully grant that we, who have received the Light of Faith, may make a right Use of it in working out our Salvation; and all others, who are yet in Darkness, may be brought to the Knowledge of thee, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost.

The wise Men being come to the Stable of Bethlehem, by the Direction of the Star, found the Child Jesus with Mary his Mother, and falling down adored him; and opening their Treasures, they offered to him Gifts, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh; let us likewise

wise in Spirit enter with them into the Stable, and adore Christ our Redeemer, and make our Offerings to him.

Let us pray.

BEfore thee, O Jesus, we bow down and adore; we adore thee in this humble State of a helpless Infant, in which thou art pleased to appear for our Salvation. We confess thee to be our Redeemer; and beg, that as thy surprizing Humility is the Manifestation of thy Goodness, so it may be in us the Encrease of our Love to thee, that we may adore thee with as profound a Humility in the Stable of *Bethlehem*, as in the Glory of thy more awful Majesty in Heaven.

Blessed be thou, O Jesus, and glorified be thy Holy Name for ever.

R. May all that is in Heaven and Earth adore thee, and publish the Glory of thy Goodness.

May thy Throne be exalted above all the Heavens.

R. And may all Nations of the Earth confess the Power of thy Majesty.

For that in Love to our Souls thou hast undertaken our Redemption.

R. And offered thyself to suffer the Punishment due to our Sins.

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For that thou appearest to us in this humble State.

R. And refusest no Humiliation that can be serviceable for our eternal Good.

For this, O divine Infant, we bow down and praise thee.

R. For this we give Glory to thy Goodness and Mercy.

We confess thee to be our Lord.

R. We acknowledge thee to be our God and Redeemer.

We desire thou may'st for ever Reign in us.

R. We desire in all Things to become thy Disciples.

Let us pray.

REceive, O blessed Jesus, this Homage, we pray thee; and since it is the Effect of our Faith, and Love of thy Goodness, let not thy Mercy be wanting to us, which we now adore; but as thou hast called us to believe, so now graciously vouchsafe to confirm us in thy Service.

Grant us a Spirit like those holy Men, who came on this Day out of the *East* to adore thee. *R. Amen.*

Grant that their Example may be our Pattern; and that the Virtues which were so remarkable in them, the First-fruits of

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the Gentiles, may be revived in us their Followers. *R. Amen.*

Grant that with the same Readiness as they did, we may obey thy Calls, and let no Difficulties occasion in us Delays in the Execution of thy Commands. *R. Amen.*

Grant we may with Constancy pursue our Way, where Duty calls us, and neither be dejected nor tired in our Endeavours, even when thou art pleased to withdraw thy Light and Comforts from us. *R. Amen.*

Grant we may ever seek thee, O Jesus, all our Lives with the Diligence of these wise Men, and with their Courage despise all worldly Convenience for finding thee. *R. Amen.*

Grant that our Faith may be ever like theirs, strong and vigorous, and not to be weakened by human Improbabilities. *R. Amen.*

Grant that with their Sincerity we may this Day make our Offerings to thee, and with an entire Submission leave both ourselves, and all that belongs to us, in thy Hands. *R. Amen.*

Behold therefore, O God and Redeemer, we acknowledge here before thee that whatever we possess is thy Gift, and the Effect of thy Bounty to us; and whatever Opportunities we have of approaching thee

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thee, are what thy Mercy has appointed for our Good : Now as all these come from thee, so to thee again they ought to return ; and this is the Day wherein we desire to make an Offering of all to thee, and in this Offering acknowledge thee to be our God. Grant, we beseech thee, we may be sincere in what we do, and that thy Goodness may accept, and thy Grace confirm, the Oblation we make.

The first Offering is our Gold: Whatever we have of this, whether little or much, behold, with the truly wise Men, we lay it before thee ; we confess it to be what thou hast entrusted in our Hands, and that to thee we must give an Account. Grant therefore, we beseech thee, that we may be wise Administrators of it, and employ it according to thy Will and Direction. R. *Grant this, O Jesus.*

Grant we may not give it to the Devil, in making it serviceable to Sin. R. *Grant this, O Jesus.*

Grant we may not hoard it covetously, nor spend it prodigally or vainly. R. *Grant this, O Jesus.*

But so mercifully direct us, that we may be just in giving to every one what is their due ; charitable in the Relief of the Distressed, and careful in providing for the Necessities of Life, as thou hast appointed ; that so our Gold, and whatever

we possess, may be made an acceptable Offering to thee, O Jesus. R. *Grant this, O Jesus, and mercifully help us in the due Execution of what we now propose.*

The second Offering is our Incense: In this, O Jesus, we offer to thee our Hearts in Prayer; desiring that our Necessities may be known to thee, and that our Sighs and Desires may ascend to Heaven like Incense in thy Sight.

Grant therefore that all our Lives we may be zealous in laying hold of the Opportunities of Prayer which thou givest us, and that no Sloth or Neglect may hinder us from offering this Incense to thee. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Jesus, and now hear our Prayer.*

Grant, that as often as we perform this Duty, we may do it with such Attention of Mind, and Fervour of Spirit, that our Hearts may accompany our Lips, and ascend as a sweet Perfume before thee. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Jesus, and now hear our Prayer.*

Grant, that as often as we make this Offering to thee, we may appear with the Reverence of the wise Men, who coming into thy Presence, fell down and adored thee; that so nothing unbecoming thy Majesty may be found in us. R. *Grant this Petition, O Jesus, and now hear our Prayer.*

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The third Offering is of Myrrh: In this, O Jesus, we offer whatever Bitterness shall come to be the Portion of our Life. Desiring thee to accept from our Hands all that we shall suffer, whether in such voluntary Mortifications as we shall chuse by thy Spirit, or such other Trials as thou shalt chuse for the Punishment of our Sins.

Grant therefore, O Jesus, that we may receive and bear with such Patience all the Troubles of this Life, that our Suffering may become a grateful Offering to thee. R. *Hear our Petition, O Jesus, and grant us Patience.*

Grant we may be watchful against all the Violence of Inclination, all the Attempts of our Corruption, and offer a daily Sacrifice to thee, in the Denial of our own Wills. R. *Hear our Petition, O Jesus, and grant we may make this daily Offering to thee.*

Grant we may daily labour to overcome ourselves, as to all that Impatience and Self-love, which so often rob us of the Offering we are to make, and so often render us the Object of thy Displeasure. R. *Hear us, O Jesus, and help us in removing all our Difficulties.*

Thus, O Jesus, we offer to thee our Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh: Accept, we beseech thee, our Offering,

and so confirm us by thy Grace, that all our Lives we may abide faithful to thee.

Consider our Weakness, O Blessed Redeemer, and this Day give us thy Blessing; such a Blessing as may be a Help against all our Failings, and perfect us in every Duty. Thou art come, O Jesus, to save us; take us therefore now into thy Protection, and being delivered from all the Snares of Darkness and Sin, lead us on in the Ways of Salvation.

Let us pray.

O God, who by the Conduct of a Star didst this Day reveal thy only Begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant that we, who have now known thee by Faith, may be brought at length to the Sight of thy Divine Majesty. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

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*Sunday within the Octave of the
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LUKE ii. 42, 52.

BEing taught in this Day's Gospel, that Jesus, with Mary and Joseph, went up from Nazareth to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Feast of the Passover, according to the Custom; let us beg this Day of Almighty God, that from so great an Example we may be zealous in observing the Feasts of the Church, and carefully avoid all Prophanations of them.

Let us pray.

O God, who didst command thy People to observe some Days with a religious Solemnity for a yearly Remembrance of thy particular Mercies to them: Grant that we also having signal Mercies, to which a perpetual Remembrance is due from all Generations, may observe, with a just Reverence, the Days which are set apart for this end.

To this, O God, may a due Sense of Gratitude oblige us; since nothing can

be a greater Confusion to us, than for us, most unworthy and vile Sinners, to receive the greatest of Blessings from thy Hand, and not to publish thy Goodness in the religious Observance of such Days, as with a grateful Commemoration are to perpetuate the Remembrance of them.

Grant therefore, that as often as we are called to the Acknowledgment of thy Mercies, we may have our Souls raised to thee in Gratitude, Adoration, and Praise: That we may join with the heavenly Choirs, in magnifying that Bounty which has been so merciful to us: That we may be solicitous how to make a good Use, and improve under thy Favours: That we may endeavour to approach to that Goodness, which so powerfully invites us: That we may enquire into all our sinful Disorders, by which we ungratefully provoke that Hand, which by such wonderful Mercies is labouring for our eternal Good: That by Exercises of Piety, in doing Good to others, we may express our Gratitude to thee, and find Comfort in following the Example thou hast given us.

In this Method, O God, may we observe thy sacred Solemnities, that so while we have the Benefit, thou may'st be glorified in thy own Works. And as often as we present ourselves before thee in
Prayer

Octave of the Epiphany. 153

Prayer on these Days, let it be our first Endeavour to place ourselves in Spirit near this Holy Family of *Jesus, Maria, Joseph*, and by observing them, learn how to pray. O God! How are their Hearts raised towards thee! With what Raptures of Spirit do they pray! With what a profound Humility and Reverence do they adore! With what a due Composure of Mind and Body do they appear before thee, testifying thy sacred Presence, and glorifying thee in the Memory of thy Mercies!

Thus, O God, may we endeavour to do; may this be our Pattern as often as we are called by the Remembrance of thy Mercies to the Temple, or bend our Knees before thee; may the Sight of *Jesus, Mary* and *Joseph*, in the Temple, teach us how to pray.

This, O God, we acknowledge our Duty, and most earnestly beg thy Grace for the careful Observance of it. And hence, O most merciful Lord, we beseech thee to preserve us from all kind of Prophanation and Neglect of these Days which are sanctified to us by thy particular Blessings; since we are very sensible, how provoking an Ingratitude it must be, for us then to neglect and offend thee, when thy Goodness has obliged us to be more faithful to thee.

Let thy Mercy therefore watch over us in a particular Manner on the Days, which are consecrated by the Memory of thy Mercies. Then, O God, let thy Grace preserve us.

From indulging ourselves in Laziness and unnecessary Sleep. R. *Amen.*

From Sloth, Tepidity, and Indevotion. R. *Amen.*

From all Kinds of mis-spending the Time. R. *Amen.*

From giving the Time to Vanity. R. *Amen.*

From giving the Time to Gluttony. R. *Amen.*

From giving the Time to idle Company, in Drinking or Gaming; to dangerous Conversation, to sinful or disedifying Divertisements. R. *Amen.*

From giving the Time to unnecessary Labour, unnecessary Journeys, or to the Sollicitude of a worldly Spirit. R. *Amen.*

In these, and such other Particulars, preserve us, O Lord, and mercifully deliver us from all Abuses of that Time which is consecrated to thee; that we may not prophane what is Holy, nor then provoke against us thy Displeasure, when we are invited by thy Mercies to make our Approaches towards Heaven.

We know the Days cannot sanctify us, except we keep them Holy; neither can they

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Octave of the Epiphany. 155

they be well-pleasing to thee, our God, if we prophane them. It was by the Prophanations of the *Jews*, their Solemnities, though of thy own Appointment, became troublesome, nay even hateful to thee; so thou hast declared by thy Prophet. O God! Let it not be so with us; may we banish from them all Kinds of Abuses, and so sanctify them, according to their Institution, that they may be to the Advantage of our Souls, and to the Glory of thy Name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Mary and Joseph having with Grief sought Jesus for Three Days, at length found him in the Temple: Hence let us take Occasion to pray, that in all our Troubles of this Life we may seek Comfort in the Temple, and there find it.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast visited thy most faithful Servants with Troubles, and manifested thyself in thy own Time to be their Comforter; grant that in all our Exercises of this kind we may not be dejected, but being constant under our Trials, may persevere untired till we have found Comfort in thee.

Hence we implore thy Help, O God, that, however we may seek Relief from Human Means, yet still our great Expectation

tion may be from thee; and therefore that we may with Fervour persevere in our Prayers, and on thy Goodness depend for the Remedy of our Complaints.

Hear us, O merciful Father, in this Petition, because we see what our general Weakness is; upon moderate Trials we lose our Patience, and generally all inward Peace; we fall into Disturbance both with ourselves and others, and opening our Hearts either to Dejection or Passions, we seem to forget that our Comfort is to be sought from thee.

O God! How unlike is this to thy faithful Servants, who under every Weight of Trouble have still call'd upon thee, and putting their whole Cause into thy Hands, have waited with a firm Confidence on thy Goodness, either to deliver them from their Afflictions, or to give Strength to bear them!

How unlike is it to the Example we have propos'd to us in the holy Couple this Day, who in their Trouble went to the Temple to seek Relief, and there found what they sought!

O merciful God, grant we may learn from these great Examples thou hast set before us; and that from the Encouragement of their Success, as often as any Trouble happens, our first Step may be to the Temple, there to lay open our Cause before

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before thee, and to implore thy Goodness in our Behalf. There in thy Presence may we discern the Unreasonableness of all immoderate Disquiet, of excessive Sollicitude, and of every Passion; there may we labour to suppress all such arising Motions and being strengthened in Hope, to fix our Hearts and Eyes on thee, as the only Fountain from whence all our Help can come.

Thus, O God, are we taught by thy only Son, thus by his faithful Followers; and may this, O God, be our Practice, that so, whatever our Affliction be, it may certainly have this one Effect upon us, to draw us to the Temple, to the House of Prayer, and nearer to thee.

Jesus being found in the Temple, and questioned by his Mother for thus Absenting himself, he gave this Answer: Why is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's Business? Hence let us take Occasion to pray that our great Care may be at all Times, to be about our Father's Business, that is, such as God demands of us, that so we may deserve no Reproof, either from God or Man.

Let

Let us pray.

O God, who hast annexed Duties to every State and commanded us not only to be faithful in them, but likewise so to perform them, as not serving the Eye, or with regard to this World, but as serving thee, our Lord: Grant we may duly consider all the Obligations of our State, and perform them as the very Business which thou, O Lord, hast recommended to us, and of which we must give thee an Account.

Hence we beseech thee, let no Sloth or Neglect prevail upon us, to the Injury of any Business that belongs to our Charge; but let the Concern for Justice, and the Love of thee, our God, have that Power with us, as to overcome all Inclinations prejudicial to our Duty.

May this, O Blessed Lord, be our Rule, as to every Obligation belonging to our State, to consider thy Command in all we do, and to let our Fidelity be ever answerable to the Commands of such a Lord, whose All-seeing Eye is Witness of all our Steps, and of all our Ways.

And as to all other *Exercises, Undertakings, Divertisements*, and *Rest*, give us Grace to consider, whether in *themselves* or in the *Measure and Circumstances* of them, they are according to thy Will, O Lord, and
what

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what thou approveſt : And where-ever we have ſufficient Motives to doubt, there, O Lord, give us ſuch Reſolution and Strength, as to break off all ſuch *Customs* or *Ways*, as we have Reaſon to apprehend *diſagreeable to thy Holy Will*.

For this, O God, is what we propoſe and deſire, that where-ever we are, and whatever we are doing, we may be ever able, if demanded, to anſwer, that *we are about our Father's Buſineſs*. What a Satisfaction would this be, O God, and what a ſolid Ground of inward Peace, if we could by thy aſſiſting Grace gain this Point. Favour us, we beſeech thee, and grant what we now aſk, ſince it muſt ſo much contribute to thy Glory, and our ever-laſting Good.

Let us pray.

WE beſeech thee, O Lord, let thy Divine Goodneſs be favourable to the Prayers of thy People, here humbling themſelves before thee; that they may diſcern what they ought to do, and be able to do what they know. Through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thy Son.

Octave

Octave of the Epiphany.

John i. 2. ix. 3, 4.

THIS being the Conclusion of the great Solemnity of the Epiphany, let us direct our Thoughts to the Mercy that was shew'd to the wise Men, and in particular make it our Petition, that as God was pleas'd by the Light of a Star to lead them to Christ, so he would vouchsafe to let the same Mercy reach likewise all those Gentiles throughout the World, who are yet in Darkness, and know not the Way of Salvation.

Let us pray.

O God, who, by the Light of an unusual Star, didst shew Mercy to the Gentiles of the East, and bring them to the Knowledge of Christ; shew the like Mercy, we beseech thee, to all those unhappy People throughout the World, who as yet know not thee their God, nor have a Faith in that Name in which all are to be sav'd.

Look upon them, O God, with the Eye of Compassion, and have regard to
their

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their manifold Distress. See how they give thy Glory to Creatures, and worship the Work of their own Hands. See how thy Name is blasphem'd amongst them, and how they glory in the Ways of Perdition. See how miserably they are deluded by the Enemy, and live on without any Sense of their Unhappiness.

O God, have Mercy, we beseech thee, upon these poor Souls, and bring them to the Light of the Gospel: Suffer them no longer to go astray after their own Imaginations; but out of the numberless Ways of thy Providence ordain such Means, by which they may be effectually rescued from their Misery.

Remember, O God, the Promises made to our Forefathers, and fulfil them now in the Call of the *Gentiles*. Thou hast shew'd this Mercy to many Nations, for which we have Reason to bless thy Name; but how many Nations are still in Darkness! O God, let thy Bowels of Compassion be mov'd upon these also, that they may no longer walk on in the Paths of Death, but be mercifully led into the Ways of Salvation.

Hear our Prayers, we beseech thee, in Behalf of all those who are yet under the Punishment of Darkness, and let that Eternal Light shine upon them, who came to be the Light of the *Gentiles*. How long,

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long, O Lord, how long will thy Anger be provok'd against them! Be not Angry, we beseech thee, to the End, but let thy Mercy now take place; because thou hast no Delight in the Destruction of the Unjust, but willest that all be Sav'd.

Deliver them, O Lord, from the Darkeness of Infidelity.

R. And let the Light of thy Saving Faith shine upon them.

Open their Hearts, O Lord, to receive the Doctrine of Life.

R. And by the Power of thy Grace bring them into the Fold of thy Christ.

Let them also, O Jesus, partake of the Fruit of thy Redemption.

R. Manifest thy Goodness to all that know thee not, and bring them into the Way of Salvation.

That all Nations of the Earth may glorify thy Name.

R. And all People confess with one Voice that thou art their God.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and Everlasting God, who desirest not the Death of Sinners, but that all should be Sav'd, mercifully hear our Prayers, and grant that all Nations may be converted from Infidelity to the Knowledge of thee, the True and Living God;

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God; and being united to thy Church, may be in the Way of inheriting thy Promises. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Let us pray likewise, that as God was pleas'd to guide these Holy Men by a Star going before them, so he would also vouchsafe to guide us in our Pilgrimage of this Life, and let his Light go before us in all our Ways,

Let us pray.

O God, to whom all the Unhappiness of our Temper is known, who seest how great is our Ignorance and Rashness; how bold we are in undertaking, while we see nothing before us; have Compassion on us, we beseech thee, and mercifully prevent in us all the Mischiefs of our Presumption and Blindness.

Make us sensible, in the first Place, O God, of the many Hazards that are before us, if we trust to our selves, if we rely upon our own Management, Choice and Discretion; and that we can look for nothing but Miscarriage, if we seek for no better Guide.

Hence, O God, let it be thy Mercy to convince us that we are under a Necessity of Depending upon thee, that we are oblig'd at all Times to consult thee, to advise with thee, and to beg thy Direction, if ever

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ever we expect either thy Blessings or Success on our Endeavours.

This, O God, is what we acknowledge here before thee, that we can have no Confidence in our own Conduct; and therefore we most earnestly beseech thee to be our God and our Guide in all our Ways; that, as long as we are Pilgrims here upon Earth, we may have thy Light to go before us.

And this it is we now ask of thee, O merciful Lord, that (since we have no Sight of what is before us, and are wholly ignorant of the Things that are for our Peace and Good) thou would'st vouchsafe to have Compassion on us in this our unhappy State, and undertake to be our Counsel, our Light, and our Guide.

What Security, O God, can we have who are so blind, if we have not thy Light to go before us? Consider us therefore, we beseech thee, and leave us not to ourselves.

In all our Considerations be thou, O Lord, a Guide to us. R. *Amen.*

In all our Resolutions. R. *Amen.*

In all our Undertakings. R. *Amen.*

In every Choice we are to make. R. *Amen.*

In all we are to say, direct thou our Words. R. *Amen.*

In all we are to do, direct our Actions. R. *Amen.*

In

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In every Difficulty, be thou a Light to us. R. *Amen.*

Let not the World govern us. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Let us not be guided by our Inclinations. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Let us not be directed by our Passions. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Let us not consult with Vanity, Interest, Self-love, or any worldly Consideration, but with thy holy Will, O God. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, a Director to us, as thou didst direct *Noah* in building the Ark. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, a Counsel to us, as thou wast to *Abraham* in the whole Conduct of his Life. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, a Guide to us, as thou wast to *Lot* in escaping out of *Sodom*. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, a Light to us in all our Ways, as thou wast to *Moses* in *Egypt*, and in the Desert. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, the Determiner of all our Resolutions, as thou wast to *David* whenever he consulted thee. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Be thou, O Lord, the Inspirer of all our Undertakings, and a Guide to all our Steps,

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Steps, as thou wast to the wise Men in guiding them to the Stable of *Bethlehem*.

R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Let us pray.

O God, who hast shewn Mercy to so many thy faithful Servants, and particularly to those whose Memory we now honour, in affording them a heavenly Light to be a Guide to their Steps, shew the like Favour to us also, O Father of Mercy, that amidst the many Hazards, to which we are expos'd, we may be secur'd under thy Protection, and be conducted at length to the Presence of thee our God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

The wise Men having ador'd our Redeemer, and left their Offerings with him, they were directed by Almighty God, not to return to Herod, but to go by another Way into their own Country; let us hence take Occasion to pray, that God would please to direct us in our Way to that Country, to which we are going; and that we may not return the same Way, by which we came from it.

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Let us pray.

O God, who wast pleas'd to manifest thy Pleasure to these holy Men of returning Home another way, grant we may take the Advantage of this Instruction, and be solicitous in returning Home another way, than that by which we came.

We must confess, O God, through thy Mercy, Paradise is our Country. 'Tis for this we are created, to this we are call'd; and such is the Goodness of our Redeemer, that he becomes Man to become our Guide, to shew us the Way, and help us forward in it.

And having now known Christ by Faith, how are we forbidden the Way by which we came? We departed from Paradise, we must acknowledge it, by the Ways of Pride and Disobedience; by seeking to please ourselves, and doing our own Will; by following our Appetite, and the Love of visible Things; by the Concupiscence of the Eyes, and the Contempt of thy Law.

By these Ways, O blessed Lord, we have departed from our Country, and from thee, our God; and if we go on in the same, what is this, but to return to *Herod*? What is this but to return to Infidelity, to depart still farther from our Country, and
to

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to lose all Hopes of finding our Place of Rest, and thee, our only Happiness, and our God?

Grant therefore, most gracious Lord, we may be now obedient to thy Summons, and being convinc'd of the Necessity, be likewise resolute in taking another Way. And what is this Way, but that which thou, O Jesus, hast shew'd us; the Way of Obedience and Humility; the Way of Self-denial and Despising the World; the Way of Mourning for our Sins, and seeking above all Things to do thy holy Will?

By this Way, O God, may we return, it being the only Way which can bring us safe to our Country. In this thou hast commanded us to walk; give us thy Grace, we beseech thee, to walk on in it, and whatever Difficulties we find, give us Strength to overcome them, and Perseverance to hold on to the End.

Be favourable to us, O Blessed Lord, in this Petition, because on the Grant of this depends our eternal Welfare. We are very sensible, the Ways of Death can never bring us to Life Everlasting; and if we expect to arrive at length in the Region of Bliss, we must walk in the Ways that lead to it. Put us therefore, we beseech thee, into these Ways by thy heavenly Light, and let thy Grace confirm us in them, till we come to find what
we

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we seek, and to the Possession of what we have found.

Let us pray.

O God, whose only Son did appear in the Substance of our Flesh; grant, we beseech thee, that we may be inwardly reform'd by him, whom we have acknowledged Coming in our Likeness; who livest and reignest with thee in the Unity.

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

John ii. 1, 11.

IN this Day's Gospel being inform'd that Jesus with his Mother and Disciples were invited to a Marriage Feast at Cana of Galilee; let us beg of Almighty God this Day, that in all Feasts and Entertainments, we may manage both ourselves; and all, as far as we are concern'd, with that general Moderation and Temperance, as if Jesus with the blessed Virgin and Disciples were present at it.

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Let

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Let us pray.

O God, who know'st the many Failings to which we are subject, and this more especially at Entertainments, where Plenty and Example are Provocations of Variety of Excess; grant, we beseech thee, for the future, we may keep a strict Watch upon ourselves, and that as often as we come into such Circumstances, we may be resolute in standing against, and discountenancing all that is sinful.

Grant we may be under as much Reserve as if thou, O Jesus, hadst Place at the Table, and gavest Rules to the Entertainment; as if we saw thy sacred Eyes upon us, observing all whatever we say or do.

Aw'd by this Apprehension and by this Truth, that thou, O God, art Witness of all our Actions, may we be fearful of all that can possibly be displeasing to thee, and in the Midst of many Incitements to Evil, ever stand upon our Guard, resolv'd not to please ourselves or others by offending thee.

Hence, O blessed Lord, as often as we are in Company, or at any Entertainments, we beseech thee so to strengthen us by thy holy Grace, that we may yield to no sinful

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ful Weakness. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may not so be led by an ungovern'd Appetite, as to commit any Excess. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That our Civility to Friends may be confin'd within such Bounds, as are prescrib'd by the Gospel, and not run into any Intemperance. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That no weak Compliance may draw us into any thing that is sinful, or unbecoming our State. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may not be laugh'd out of our Duty, or through any human Consideration act contrary to our Conscience. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may encourage no Kind of Excess, provoke none to Intemperance, nor ever glory in the barbarous Victory of having made Brutes of Men. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may govern our Inclinations by thy Law, and not hearken to any, which are not agreeable to the Moderation and Temperance of the Christian Profession. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may have a due Guard upon our Words, and take no Liberties of speaking, nor join in any Discourse, which can give any Offence, either to thee our God,

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or to our Neighbour. *R. We beseech thee, hear us.*

That we may keep our Eyes and our Ears under the same Restraint, and not then provoke thee by any Sin, when we are partaking of thy Blessings. *R. We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give ear to us, O God, in these Petitions, and there mercifully assist us by thy Grace, where we are subject to such Variety of Weakness. Leave us not, we beseech thee, to our own Infirmities, but by thy Grace confirm us against them, that in all Circumstances we may shew ourselves thy Servants, and faithful Observers of thy Law.

And since in such Meetings there are generally many Dangers, therefore, considering our great Weakness, we beseech thee to take from us the Love of all Publick Feasting, of Company and Entertainments: Give us a real Fear of them, as of things likely to be prejudicial to us; and hence, O God, let it be much more our Concern, how to decline them than how to be present at them.

But whenever there shall be sufficient Motive for our Presence, then may we follow the Example in this Gospel, and invite thee, O Jesus, to accompany us at the Feast, that by thee, our Conversation may be Sanctified, and nothing be found in us unworthy of thy Presence. Grant this,

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this, O Jesus; that so whatever our Failings have been in this Kind, they may be all reform'd.

Jesus at this Marriage Feast having wrought the Miracle of changing the Water into Wine; let us now pray he will vouchsafe to work another like Miracle in us, of changing our weak, cold, and insipid Soul, into a lively, active, and vigorous Spirit, such as may become the Marriage of the Lamb.

Let us pray.

O Most Merciful and Ever-blessed Redeemer, who hast wrought so many Miracles for our Salvation; behold, we beseech thee, the yet unhappy State of our Souls; and see if thy Charity and Goodness will not move thee to have still Compassion on us.

The Excess of thy Love for us Sinners has been enough to oblige us to the return of an ardent Love to thee, to make us zealous for thy Honour, and fervent in all that belongs to thy Service: And yet behold, O God, how Tepid, and even Cold are we in every Thing, where thou art concern'd! How careless in our Prayers! How little mov'd with the Thoughts of Eternity! How without Relish of the common Exercises of Piety!

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So that while we are Active, as to the Things of this World, and on every Occasion discover an earnest Love for it, yet as to thee, our God, and only sovereign Good, we have little more than an outward Profession ; but as for the Signs of Loving thee with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, where do these appear amidst so much Coldness, Carelessness, and Insensibility ?

Hence, O Jesus, we have Reason to turn our Prayers to thee, to implore both thy Mercy and Power in our Behalf, to change Water into Wine, to change our cold unactive Spirit into a Spirit of Life and Vigour, to communicate a new Spirit to us, such as may quicken our Hearts with the true Love of thee, our God, may raise in us a Zeal for thy Glory, and a sincere Desire of coming to the Possession of thee.

We are sensible how much we are in want of this thy Mercy, and therefore we now join our Prayers, and most earnestly implore it.

O Father of Mercy, have regard to our present Misery ; and taking Compassion on us, let thy Grace be the Remedy of our Complaints. *R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.*

Take

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Take from us, we beseech thee, all Coldness of Spirit, which we so often find in Things belonging to thy Service.

R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.

Take from us, we beseech thee, all that Dulness and Heaviness of Spirit, which so often flats our Devotion, and keeps our Heart from ascending to thee.

R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.

Take from us, we beseech thee, all that immoderate Love of worldly Things, which links our Heart to the Earth, and takes off our Affections from our only Good. *R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.*

Take from us we beseech thee, all Excess of Self-love, all Excess of worldly Sollicitude, which so much possess our Thoughts, that there is little more than an Indifferency left for heavenly Things. *R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.*

Take from us we beseech thee, the Spirit of Sloth, and the Love of a dissipated and idle Life, which damp all our Proposals of Heaven, and render Impracticable the Rules of a Christian Life.

R. Have Compassion on us, O God, and grant our Request.

Take

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And not only thus, O God; but grant us likewise, we beseech thee, the Spirit of solid Devotion. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Prayer. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Fervour. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of true Zeal. *R. Amen.*

A Spirit thirsting after Heavenly Things.
R. Amen.

A Spirit desirous to converse with God.
R. Amen.

A Spirit earnest in being united to God. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of the New Man. *R. Amen.*

Grant these our Petitions, O God, that while we are encompass'd with this unhappy Clay, we may be deliver'd from some of that Weight of Corruption which is a Clog upon our Soul, and is ever drawing us down to the Earth.
R. Amen.

That we may have some Hope of overcoming this World and our selves, and of performing our Duties to thee in such a manner, as to find Acceptance in thy Sight. *R. Amen.*

That we may not be cast from thee for our Lukewarmness; but serving thee with a lively Spirit, may have Comfort in our Devotions, and Hopes of a happy End. *R. Amen.*

Hear us, O blessed Redeemer, and having wrought so many Miracles for our
Salva-

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Salvation, work this one more in our dull and dissipated Souls; that by a new Life we may come to the Marriage of the Lamb. R. *Amen.*

Let us pray,

ALmighty and everlasting God, who art supreme Ruler both of Heaven and Earth, mercifully give Ear to the Prayers of thy People, and grant us Peace in our Days. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

Matth. viii. 1, 13.

BEing taught in this Gospel how readily, and without any Delay, Jesus cured the Leper; how solicitous the Centurion was to find Relief for his Servant, being Sick, and with what readiness Jesus offer'd to go down to his House and heal him; let us hence pray, that we may be ever ready to give our Assistance to such as are Sick, or in any Distress, but especially to those who are under our Care.

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Let us pray.

O Blessed Jesus, who camest into this World, not only to redeem us by thy Blood, but likewise to teach us by thy Example so to shew us the Way of Salvation; mercifully grant we may carefully observe thy Life, and make it the Rule of ours, that so we may bring forth the Fruit of thy Instruction, and of thy great Charity to us.

And this Day let it be thy particular Mercy to us, that we may observe thy great Charity to the Sick, to the Poor, and to the Distress'd; and that thy Readiness was such, as to let nothing intervene between their asking and thy giving Relief.

This, O God, may we not only observe, but likewise be solicitous to practise, as often as Occasion offers, that so we may shew whose Disciples we are, and likewise what is our Hope.

But we must confess our Weakness; this we cannot do without thy Help, because of the many Difficulties we have to discourage us.

We have our Nature to discourage us, which is very often averse to such Offices of Charity, and therefore ever willing to find

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find Reasons for declining the Mortification of them.

We have Self-love to discourage us, which is bent upon some more pleasing Entertainment, and therefore not willing to yield up its own Inclinations for the doing a Charity which has no relish in it.

We have Pride to discourage us, which delighting in all that is vain, cannot bear the Humiliation of such Charity, which requires Service and Attendance on Inferiors.

We have the World and Custom to discourage us, which have made such Visits unfashionable, as Christianity most recommends.

These and many other Difficulties we have in following the Example of thy Charity, O Jesus, and therefore we want thy Help, that by thy Grace we may be able to perform what a depraved Nature, and a corrupt World have made difficult to us.

Help us therefore we beseech thee, O blessed Redeemer; and when our usual Difficulties are perswading us to depart from the Example thou hast given us, then may we remember how strict is thy Command to us of being Merciful, and helping the Distress'd. R. Grant, O God, we may remember it.

Then

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Then may we remember, how full and positive are thy Promises to such as shew Mercy. *R. Grant, O God, we may remember it.*

Then may we remember, how much we stand in need of thy Mercy, both for the Pardon of our many Sins, and for the Relief of our Wants. *R. Grant, O God, we may remember it.*

Then may we remember, how powerful the Works of Mercy are, for finding Mercy at the last Day, and obtaining a Place at the right Hand of the Judge. *R. Grant, O God, we may remember it.*

Upon these Motives, O God, may we prevail against all the Difficulties we meet in the Practice of thy Charity, and force Nature to submit, where our eternal Interest so much depends upon its Submission.

Let us no more consult Nature in Cases where thou, O God, hast spoken so plain; for since we have chosen thee for our God, what have we to do, but to observe thy Directions, and perform thy Will?

Help us, O God, in doing thus; and since the Ways of Charity and Mercy are so much thy Command to us, grant it may be our daily Sollicitude to walk in them. And in this particularly may we labour so to correct the depraved Inclinations of our Soul, till we come to find Comfort in those Exercises, which we know to be
well-

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well-pleasing to thee, and for our own eternal Good. Grant this, O merciful Lord, that having Comfort in doing thy Will, we may have likewise the Comfort of a well-grounded Hope in thy Mercy.

The Leper mention'd in this Gospel expressing a full Hope in Christ in these Words, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me Clean; and the Centurion expressing a strong Faith in Christ, join'd with a profound Humility in these Words, Lord, I am not worthy thou should'st enter under my Roof, say but the Word, and my Child shall be heal'd; let us beg to be confirm'd in Faith, and in Hope, that so, with these Petitioners, we may find the like Favour with Christ, and the like Success of our Petitions.

Let us pray.

O God, who see'st how many and great our Necessities are, and that we can obtain no Help from thee without a firm Faith in thy Power, and a strong Hope in thy Goodness, mercifully encrease these thy Gifts in us, that thro' these our Prayers finding Access to thee, we may likewise find the Effect of them in the Remedy of all our Wants.

Give us, we beseech thee, a true Sense of thy supreme and infinite Power, which hath all Things under its Command; also
that

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that whatever thou appointest must be done, and there is nothing can resist thy Will. Let our Faith, O God, be answerable to this thy Power; so that whenever we come to manifest our Necessities before thee, we may have at the same time a full Conviction, and most firm Faith in our Hearts, that thou canst easily do what we ask; that nothing is hard to thee; and that what is so very difficult to us as to draw on Despair, needs no more for thy effecting it than the only Beck of thy Will.

Such a Faith as this, may thy holy Grace quicken in us, as often as we Pray; so that at whatever time we come Petitioners into thy Presence, we may every one of us say thus in our Heart, I ask of God, whose Power is infinitely above all that I ask; he need no more than command; if thou wilt, thou canst grant my Desire.

But besides our Faith, give us, we beseech thee, such a Sense of thy infinite Goodness, as to have a firm Hope in thee; such a Hope as even to depend on thee, when we see nothing in ourselves, or in this World, wherein to trust; such a Hope as may rest on thy infinite Mercy, Compassion and Goodness, amidst the darksome Thoughts of our own Unworthiness; such a Hope, as when all other Things fail, fails not with them, but sees enough in thee,

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thee, whereon to build its Confidence and Comfort.

May such a Hope, O God, founded on thy divine Goodness, on the Truth of thy Promises, on thy Fidelity, and on the infinite Merits of our Redeemer Jesus-Christ, firmly possess our Hearts, and be our daily Support amidst all the Difficulties of Life, amidst the several Trials, amidst inward Dejection, amidst all Temptations, in Pain and Sickness, in Life, and in Death; but most particularly in the Time of Prayer, when we raise up our Hearts to thee, and manifest our Desires for the Relief of our Wants.

Then, O God, may our Hearts be enliven'd with a firm Faith and a strong Hope in thee; then may we make our Addresses with inward Comfort, as to our tender Father and merciful Lord, whose Ears are ever open to the Cries of the Afflicted, and whose Bowels of Compassion are ever mov'd upon their Necessities, whose Dependance is on thee for Help.

Thus, O God, in all our Trials, Undertakings and Prayers, may our Dependance be entirely on thee, with a Faith like that of *Abraham*. R. *Amen*.

With a Faith like that of *Susanna*. R. *Amen*.

With a Faith like that of the Three Children. R. *Amen*.

With

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With a Faith like that of the blessed Virgin. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of the Centurion. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of the Leper. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of the *Canaan*-*nean* Woman. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of the Woman, who touch'd the Hem of our Saviour's Garment. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of *Magdalen*. *R. Amen.*

With a Faith like that of the good Thief on the Cross. *R. Amen.*

Hear us, O God, and perfect us both in Faith and in Hope, like these thy Servants; that as we see thy Mercy soon appearing in the Grant of their Petitions, so we may have the same Mercy engag'd to us, and in thee find the Remedy of all our Necessities.

Thou hast sufficiently declar'd how powerful the Prayers are, that proceed from a lively Faith; and that, where the Heart is so prepar'd, thou canst not stand against it: Grant therefore, amidst so many Necessities, with which we are press'd, we may endeavour so to pray, as is most likely to obtain the Grant of our Desires.

Let

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Let no Degree of Despair have Admittance within our Breast; let all Fear, all Dejection and Doubting, be banish'd from us; that while we ask, we may not render thee averse to our own Petitions, and by our distrusting Heart shut up thy Mercies against us.

No, blessed God, let us ask as thou hast taught us, let us sollicite for thy Help in such a manner, as thou hast declar'd to be most prevailing with thee: And when we desire to obtain, let it be our principal Care to pray like those who have found the Effect of their Prayers.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and everlasting God, mercifully have Regard to our Weakness, and stretch forth the right Hand of thy Majesty to our Protection. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Fourth

Let

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

Matt. viii. 23, 27.

THE Gospel of this Day giving us an Account that the Disciples going into a Ship with Jesus, so great a Storm arose, that they were in Danger of sinking while he slept; hence let us make our Declaration this Day, that by following Christ, and by being faithful to him, we must not look to be exempt from Storms and Dangers, but rather to have a larger Share in them than others.

Having observ'd the Order of thy Providence, O God, we here make our Profession before thee, that we do not expect thy Service should exempt us from the Troubles of this Life, or that being solicitous in keeping thy Commandments, we should hence be privileg'd against the common Misfortunes of this World.

No, blessed God, we confess thy Method is far otherwise; thou hast promis'd eternal Rest to such as faithfully serve thee, and keep thy Commandments; and this is the Recompense we are to hope for all our Labours. But as to this Life, tho' thou hast made many Promises of Protection,
and

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and of Variety of Blessings, yet thou hast no where promis'd the Blessing of present Rest, of temporal Happiness, or worldly Peace. Thou hast no where promis'd we should be free from Pain or Sickness, from Miscarriages or Losses, from Injustice or Oppression, from Infamy or Indiscretion.

Rather we must own, thy best Servants have fallen under the greatest Weight of Misfortunes: We find *Abel* Murther'd; *Jacob* Robb'd of his Children; *Moses* many ways Afflicted; *David* Persecuted; *Daniel* Oppressed by Malice; *Susanna* falsely Accus'd; *Toby* struck with Blindness; the Prophets put to Death. And who were all those who had the Trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, of Bonds and Imprisonment? Who were they, who were Tortur'd, Ston'd, Saw'n asunder, slain with the Sword? Who were they, who wander'd about in Sheep-Skins and Goat-Skins, being Destitute, Afflicted, Tormented; who wander'd in Desarts, and in Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth?

These were all thy Servants, O God, who had a Zeal for thy Law, and being fearful of Offending thee, chose to embrace the greatest Hardships, rather than transgress thy Will, or do any thing to thy Displeasure: And yet, O God, being thus faithful to thee, how bitter was the
Cup,

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Cup, which thou gavest them to drink ? Through how many difficult Ways, thro' what Variety of that, which the World calls Unhappiness, Misery and Distress, didst thou lead them ? 'Tis plain therefore thy Counsels, O God, are not like those of Men ; neither are thy Mercies express'd according to the Dictates of Flesh and Blood ; but while thy Enemies enjoy a certain Peace, thy Friends are exercis'd with the Difficulties of many Trials.

Thus it was in the Old Law ; and in the New the same Discipline is still more visible : For what was the Portion of thy only Son ? He knew nothing of that, which the World calls Peace ; he was a Man of Sorrows ; his whole Life was a Cross and Martyrdom. And his Apostles, his chosen Servants and Friends, to what did he call them ? To take up their Cross, to bear Reproaches and false Accusations, to become the Hatred of the World, to suffer Scourges and Imprisonment, Hunger and Nakedness, Infamy, Persecution, and the most cruel Deaths ; so that they, who before their Faith in Christ, enjoy'd the Conveniencies of the World, and had a Share in its Goods and its Peace, after becoming his Disciples, are in a continual Storm, and all their Lives are in Danger of being overwhelm'd by the Violence of the Waves.

It

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It being thus with the Apostles, were they alone to suffer, and all their Followers to be exempt? No; as many as are united with them in Faith, are likewise called to the Fellowship of the Cross; they have the Promise of many Trials, and Persecution is their Inheritance. All, who will live piously in Jesus Christ, shall suffer Persecution.

And are we then to expect any Privilege in this Kind? No, blessed Lord, if we profess ourselves thy Disciples, we must expect a Part in bearing thy Cross; if we follow thee, as close as thy Apostles did, we must look for Storms. And these are to be such, as thou art pleas'd to appoint for us, for our Trial, for our Exercise, and for our Improvement.

If then Misfortunes befall us:

R. *If Troubles from Strangers, or Domestic Evils:*

If Pain or Sickness:

R. *If outward Afflictions, or inward Disorders:*

If the Persecution of evil Tongues:

R. *If Infamy, false Accusation or Disgrace:*

If Disappointments and Miscarriage in our Undertakings:

R. *If the Loss of Friends, and those who are most dear to us:*

If

It

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If Losses and remarkable Accidents prepare for our Ruin :

R. *If Distress or Poverty come to be our Portion :*

If we are Persecuted by private Malice, or publick Authority :

R. *If we are depriv'd of Goods, of Liberty, or Life :*

If we are left in Barrenness, or seem forsaken of God :

R. *If all Kinds of outward and inward Tribulation befall us :*

If any, or all of these happen to us, we are not to be surpriz'd, but take them as the Cup thou hast prepar'd for us ; we are to receive them in Silence, because it is thou, O Lord, hast done it ; and in all we suffer, whether justly or unjustly, we are to remember, this is our Cross ; and that to bear it, is the very Thing to which we are call'd.

But then as the Apostles being in Danger immediately had Recourse to Christ, crying out to him, Lord, save us, or else we Perish ; so let us now beg, that in all Kind of Trouble, whatever it be, we may immediately, with the Apostles, have Recourse to Christ, and from him seek Comfort and Help.

Le

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. 191

Let us pray.

O God, by the All-wise Dispensation of whose Providence and Justice thy Servants are to go through many Troubles and Dangers in this Life, mercifully grant, that whatever shall come to our Share, we may not be surpriz'd by any Weakness, but forthwith remember from whence all our Comfort and Help is to come.

May we then remember immediately to turn our Hearts to our Redeemer, and calling to mind all his Mercies, place our whole Confidence in him. R. Amen.

May we then let no immoderate Fears seize our Spirits, nor cast us down below all Hope. R. Amen.

May we not then yield to Passion, nor let any Impatience put our Souls into Disorder. R. Amen.

May we not then open our Hearts to crying Grief, nor let Confusion and Darkness Perish; eal upon us. R. Amen.

May we let no murmuring Complaints be heard from our Mouths, nor any Argument appear of any Distrust. R. Amen.

May we not then put our Trust in creatures, nor seek Comfort by any unchristian Liberties. R. Amen.

May

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May we not then seek Relief by any unwarrantable Means, nor injure our Conscience for procuring our Peace. *R. Amen.*

No, blessed Lord; but in Time of all Troubles may we raise our Hearts to thee, our Lord and our God.

R. May we call upon thy Mercies, and seek to move upon us thy Bowels of Compassion.

May we send up our Cries to thee, and by earnest Prayers importune thy Goodness to our Help.

R. May we fix our Eyes upon thee, as our only Deliverer; and place our whole Trust in thee.

May we run to thee, as thy Apostles did; and with a peaceable Submission, wait for the Effects of thy Mercy.

R. For we know that all Things are subject to thee; and therefore in thy powerful Deliverance, may we ever find that thou art our God.

Hear now our Prayers, we beseech thee, O merciful God, and grant that this may be our Method, as often as any Trouble falls upon us. Thus has thy Mercy taught us; and may the Corruption of our Nature never carry us out of this Way.

But for this, O blessed Lord, how much do we stand in Need of thy Help! Thou seest how weak we are, and that while we make these Proposals of Patience, and of
running

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running to thee in our Trouble, how very little is enough to put by all these Resolutions, to fill us with Disturbance, Impatience, or Grief; and so to darken our Soul, as to forget that Suffering belongs to us, or that we are to seek Help from thee.

Wherefore we beseech thee, O God of infinite Mercy, to consider our great Weakness, and by thy Grace to confirm us against it. Forsake us not in the Time of Trouble, nor give us up to the Conduct of our own Rashness or Passion. Make us then sensible of our Danger, and that while there are many Ways of Miscarrying, there is but one Way of true Peace, and that is, by seeking it from thee.

To thee therefore may we turn in all Dangers and Troubles, as the Apostles did; and grant we may do it with a Hope like theirs, that so like them we may ever find thee our Deliverer or Comforter in all our Misfortunes.

Let us pray.

O God, who know'st that amidst so many Dangers, through human Frailty, we are not able to subsist; grant us Health of Mind and Body, that whatever we suffer for our Sins, we may overcome by thy Assistance. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Tom. I.

I

Fifth

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.

Matt. xiii. 24, 30.

BEing taught in this Day's Gospel, that in the Field, where good Corn had been Sown there grew up Tares; and that these had been Sown by the Enemy amongst the Corn, while the Men were asleep, who should have taken Care of it; let us beg this Day of Almighty God, that he having planted good Seed in our Souls, we may not by our Carelessness give Opportunity to the Enemy of sowing his Tares in them.

Let us pray.

O Almighty and everlasting God, who hast shew'd infinite Mercy to us, unworthy Sinners, in planting so much good Seed in our Hearts, the Seed of Faith, and of so many Graces, by which we are deliver'd from our natural Barrenness, and prepar'd to bring forth Fruit to Eternity; give a Blessing, we beseech thee, to those who have the Charge of this Seed, and grant that by a due Care it may grow

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and bring forth that Fruit, which thou the heavenly Husbandman expectest from us.

And since the Enemy is solicitous to sow Tares in our Hearts, and is ever upon the Watch to observe all Opportunities, that may be favourable to his Design; grant therefore, O most Gracious Lord, that we also may be upon the Watch, and omit no Care that can be necessary for the Disappointment of his Malice.

We confess, O blessed Lord, our great Weakness, our Blindness, or rather Stupidity in this Point, who, well knowing the industrious Watchfulness of our Enemy for sowing Tares in our Hearts, are yet so very careless on our Parts, in the many Opportunities we give him for effecting his Designs against us.

These ought to be a Confusion to us, who, having so many Reasons to fear our Enemy, seem rather to be Confederate with him, even where his Proposal is of nothing less than our eternal Ruin. Therefore, O God, we here beg Leave to lay this our Weakness before thee, that the Sight of our Folly may make us ashamed of it; and the humble Acknowledgment of our Sin may obtain from thee both Mercy and Help.

We confess therefore before thee, O merciful Father, that we often give Opportunities to our Enemy of sowing Tares

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in our Soul, by our frequent Dulness of Spirit, by our great Sloth, and daily Neglect. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise that we give him Opportunities of sowing Tares in our Soul, by our idle and dissipated Life, and not being Industrious in the good Use of our Time. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise, that we give frequent Opportunities to our Enemy of sowing Tares in our Soul, by the too great Liberty we take in Conversation and unprofitable Company, by which we are expos'd to many hurtful Impressions. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise we give him frequent Opportunities of sowing Tares in our Soul, by the undue Liberty of our Thoughts, by our unprofitable Amusements, and idle Imaginations. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise we give him frequent Opportunities of sowing Tares in our Soul, by the many Passions to which

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we open our Hearts, and by which they are fitted for all his Snares. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise, we give him frequent Opportunities of sowing Tares in our Soul, by our too great Curiosity in Hearing, and Seeing, and Reading, what is unprofitable; by our immoderate Fondness of the World, Love of Vanity, and the Desire of courting our Senses, and pleasing ourselves. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

We confess likewise we give him frequent Opportunities of sowing Tares in our Souls, by our Tepidity and Neglect of Prayer, by giving Ear to ill Advisers, by being too positive in our own Ways, and avoiding or neglecting those who are our best Directors, and truest Friends. R. *We confess this our Fault before thee, O God, and most humbly beseech thee to correct it in us.*

By these, and many other Ways, O God, we give Advantage to the Enemy, and therefore we cannot pretend to be surpriz'd at finding so many Tares in our Souls; neither can we cry out with the Servants in this Gospel; *Lord, didst not thou sow good Seed in the Field? Whence therefore has it Tares?* For we know very

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well from whence the Tares come. We confess it, O God, 'tis from our own Sloth, from our general Carelessness and Neglect, and from our infinite Indiscretions, by which we lay open our Hearts to our Enemy, and not only give him Opportunity, but even invite him to come and sow his Tares.

This, O blessed Lord, is too much the Truth of our Case: And therefore what Account shall we give to thee of the Field of our Souls left us in Charge? Thou hast planted it with good Seed, and commanded us to watch, that so it may improve under our Care, and grow up to a plentiful Harvest. This is our Charge; but, O God, how Faithless are we in it, while we use so very little Care, and instead of being watchful, leave all open to the Designs of a watchful and malicious Enemy?

And tho' such be the Order of thy Providence, that the Tares are tolerated for a Time, and permitted to grow up mixt with the good Corn, yet how little is the Comfort of this, since they are only spar'd in Consideration of the good Corn, and this for a Time only, till Harvest comes, when this Sentence already pronounc'd is to be executed against them, *Of being tied up, and cast into the Fire!*

And is this to be my Fate, if growing up amongst the good Corn, I become as a

Tare!

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Tare! O Jesus, thou hast pronounc'd it, and being Judge of the Quick and the Dead, thy Sentence must stand Good for all Eternity. And 'tis for this Sentence I am preparing, if by my Carelessness I lay myself open to the Enemy, and give him the Occasion of sowing Tares in my Soul; for what must I unavoidably thus become, but one of these here signified by the Tares, which is a corrupt and sinful Christian!

O blessed Jesus, who cam'st for the Salvation of Sinners, have Mercy on me, I beseech thee, and give me thy Grace to prevent this Unhappiness. Give me Grace to be more Careful in the Charge thou hast left me, and more Watchful against the Enemy. For tho' the Wicked shall never wholly be separated from the Just till the Day of Judgment; yet every particular Christian, tho' a Sinner, may depart from the Company of the Wicked, and forsaking his evil Ways, may return to his Duty; and thou, O God, hast promised to receive him.

Since this may be, and what is now Tares may thro' thy Mercy become good Corn, shew this Mercy to us thy Servants, and by the Direction of thy Grace may we take such Ways, as to dispossess the Devil of whatever Power he has over us, and by a watchful Eye cut off all

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those Opportunities, we have hitherto given him, for sowing Tares in our Souls.

For this End grant, O God, we beseech thee, that we may have a true Sense of our own Weakness, and of the great Danger in which we are, of being drawn into Snares by the Enemy.

Hence may we ever keep a strict Guard upon ourselves, and not go on with that Confidence and Security, as hitherto we have done. Rather may we learn to fear, and be jealous of our own Inclinations, of our Desires, and of all the Ways, that seem pleasing to us, and not be too Confident of a seeming Innocence.

'Tis by being too Bold and Credulous, we have hitherto been deceived; and 'tis only by being more Careful in our Ways, we can possibly recover from our present Unhappiness. Help us therefore, O God, in this Part of Christian Wisdom, and teach us by a due Watchfulness to examine all our Steps.

Deliver us likewise, we beseech thee, from all that Sloth and Laziness of Spirit, by which we have hitherto given Advantage to our Enemy; and quicken us now with new Life, that we may no more with Tepidity perform the Duties of Eternity, but find Fervour and Zeal to carry us on in all the Exercises of Religion, and thro' all the Obligations of a Christian Life.

Hear



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Hear us, O most gracious Lord, in this Petition, and mercifully grant what we now ask, since 'tis only by becoming more Watchful and Fervent, we can be deliver'd from the unhappy Character of being Tares in thy Field, and from that Sentence of Terror pronounc'd against them.

Let us pray.

PReserve, O Lord, we beseech thee, thy People by thy constant Mercy, that confiding only in the Support of thy heavenly Grace, they may be always safe under thy Protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

Matt. xiii. 31, 35.

BEing taught in this Day's Gospel, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Grain of Mustard-seed, which when sown is the Least of all Seeds, but grown-up is the Greatest among Herbs, and becomes a Tree, so that the Birds of the Air lodge in its Branches; hence let us offer up our Prayers to Almighty God, that whereas our Profession is to seek him

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him and his Kingdom, we may seek him according to the Direction of this Gospel, in the little and contemptible Things of this World, with the Hopes of what they are to be afterwards in their Growth.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast taught us in this Gospel how we are to seek thee and thy Kingdom, mercifully grant that from thee we may take Directions how to find thee; and that whatever our natural Inclinations be, we may not let these prevail against what thou hast been pleas'd to teach us.

Hence, O blessed God, since thou hast made Choice of the mean and inconsiderable Things of this World as the truest Resemblance of thy Kingdom, and as the proper Means to find it; so mercifully dispose our Hearts, we beseech thee, that we may with Satisfaction embrace those Ways which thou hast recommended, and be afraid of all that which seems contrary to the Choice thou hast made.

This we have Reason to ask, because thou, O Lord, art All-wise, and hast not only a perfect Knowledge of us, but like-wise of what is best for us, in order to our eternal Good; whilst we, poor, blind and unhappy Worms, neither know ourselves, nor discern the Things that are for

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Sixth Sunday after Epiphany. 203

our Good, and much less have a Relish of them.

What Way therefore can be safe for us in this our dangerous and uncertain State, but to follow thy Direction, to be afraid of Inclination, and all that we can call ourselves, and to depend on thee ! How Secure should we walk, notwithstanding all our Blindness, in following thee our Guide ! What Comfort should we find in such Security, amidst all the Struggles of an uneasy Nature.

Hear us therefore, O God, in this Particular, and where Nature carries us with such an universal Contradiction to what thou adviseest, give us Strength to stand against it, and notwithstanding all its flattering Impressions, still to make thy Gospel our Guide. Hear us in this, and mercifully give us Grace according to our Wants ; for great Grace is necessary where our Wants are great.

Give us Grace, O God, whereby may be diminish'd in us the Love of all whatever the World esteems great. R. *Be*

merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.

Give us Grace, O God, whereby may be diminish'd in us the Desire of being esteemed or regarded by the World. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give

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Give us Grace, O God, not to value the Esteem of the World, and not to be Sollicitous for any of those Things, by which its Esteem is to be gain'd. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give us Grace, O God, whereby our Hearts may be prepar'd to Understand, and have a true Value for the contemptible Things of this World which thou hast chosen. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give us Grace, O God, to chuse the Ways of Humility, both inwardly in our Hearts, and outwardly before Men. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give us Grace, O God, to embrace with Chearfulness all those thy Appointments or Accidents, which seem design'd for our Humiliation. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give us Grace, O God, to accept and bear with Comfort all Reproaches and Contempts from Men; and when we seem, even unjustly, to be lessen'd, then teach us to rejoice. R. *Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.*

Give us Grace, O God, to remit all natural Positiveness and Stiffness in our own Ways, and ever to yield to others, rather than contend; where it may be done
without

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without Injury to Truth or Justice. R.
Be merciful to us, O God, and give us this Grace.

Give Ear to us, O God, in these Particulars, and convince us in this important Concern, how much more powerful thy Grace is than Nature, by obliging it to yield to thy holy Will.

And whenever it comes to the Trial, making Opposition against what thou hast prescribed, then, O merciful Lord, vouchsafe to quicken in us a lively Faith of what thou hast promised, and give us Courage to break through all the Difficulties that are raised against us.

Then, O God, when we are in humbling Circumstances, may we remember the immense Growth of this little Seed; and that what seems Contemptible, is the proper Expedient for becoming Great with thee; that it is the true Way to enlarge the Soul, to make it capable of heavenly Blessings, and to become the Abode of thy holy Spirit, and of all the Graces that attend him.

Then may we remember, that the Way of Humility is what thou, O Jesus, hast chosen; that thou didst chuse it for thyself, and hast given Command to us to learn of thee, and follow thy Steps. Thou, O divine Redeemer, wast pleased to be humbled in all Ways, and to become as a little

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little Seed in the Eyes of all: And how prodigious was thy Growth, when, for being humbled, thou wast exalted to the Right Hand of the Father?

May this now, O Jesus, be our only Ambition, to desire the Greatness of Heaven; and may we seek it by tracing thy Steps, as thou hast prescribed; now may we be content to be humbled, and rejoice under the Hope of the Exaltation thou hast promised.

Christ, our Redeemer, having likewise declared in this Gospel, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like to Leaven, which a Woman took, and hid in three Measures of Meal, till the Whole was leavened; let us likewise beg that our Souls may so partake of the spiritual Leaven, as to become wholly Leaven'd and Spiritual.

We confess, O God, here before thee, that great is our natural Corruption, and that hence our Souls are so very heavy and dull, that sinking to the Earth, they are of themselves incapable of being raised to the Love or Desire of heavenly Things.

But thou, O merciful Father, hast had Compassion on us, and bountifully provided us with Help; thou hast provided us with a spiritual Leaven, by which our natural Heaviness being removed, we may become Spiritual, and our Souls be raised above the Earth,

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Earth, even to the Desire of being united to thee.

This Leaven is the Word of the Gospel, which is the Word of Life: This Leaven is thy holy Spirit, O God, working in the Heart of a Sinner: This Leaven is the holy Eucharist, which is the Nourishment of a Christian Soul. These different Sorts of Leaven has thy divine Wisdom found out, for changing this heavy Clay, and communicating to this Flesh a new Life, even so as to make it live by the Spirit.

And this it is we now ask of thee, O God; That whereas thou hast been so Merciful in the Provision thou hast made for us, this spiritual Leaven of thy holy Word, thy holy Spirit, and holy Eucharist, may be receiv'd in our Hearts, and have its Effect there till the Whole become leavened.

Till we find the Effect of it in all the Faculties of our Souls, and Senses of our Bodies; till we find our Affections and Desires raised above the Earth, and thirsting after eternal Goods; till we find our Heart panting after thee, our God; till we find our Eyes, our Ears, our Tongue, and all our outward Man, brought into Subjection to the Spirit.

In this Manner, O heavenly Father, we desire to find the Effects of this spiritual
Leaven;

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Leaven; for we must confess it to be a Confusion to us, that having the Faith of thy Word in our Hearts, and so often receiv'd the Bread of Life, the Effects of it appear so very little in us; but that still the Bent of our Hearts is to the Earth, and our Conversation is still so Worldly.

O God! when shall we find a Change! When shall this Weight of Earth be taken from our Hearts, and thy spiritual Leaven begin to work in us some better Effects! 'Tis a reproachful Thing to reflect how much we believe, and how many Helps thy fatherly Bounty has provided for us, and yet how very inconsiderable Effects can be discovered in us of all whatever thou hast done? But that still Self-love, the Flesh, and the World, are as prevailing in us, as if we had been no Part of thy Care, and thy Gospel had taught us to seek no other Heaven, but that of here seeking ourselves, and pleasing the World.

This, O God, we have Reason to lament, and with the Tears and Sighs of an afflicted Spirit to importune for Help. Help us therefore, we beseech thee, O merciful Lord, and have Compassion on us; hear now our Prayers, and let our Desires ascend before thee, and open the Treasures of thy Mercies upon us.

Thou

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Thou hast provided a spiritual Leaven, behold we open our Breasts to receive it; hide it, we beseech thee, in our Hearts, and give a Blessing to it, that it may work its Effect in us, that our Weight of Corruption being remov'd, we may become wholly leaven'd, according to the Design of thy Mercy. Hear us, O God, and give a Blessing to us.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that continually meditating on Things that are Just and Reasonable, we may both in Word and Work perform what is acceptable to thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Septuagesima-Sunday.

Matt. xx. 1, 16.

BEing taught in this Day's Gospel, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Man who went forth to hire Workmen into his Vineyard, and promised them the Reward of their Labour; let us beg of Almighty God, this Day, that we may be truly sensible of our Voca-

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Vocation; that we are called to labour in a Vineyard, and that our Labour is to continue till the Evening of this Life, which is the Time of receiving our Hire.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and Everlasting God, who hast given to every one of us the Charge of our Soul, and call'd us to labour in it, as in the Care of a Vineyard; grant, in thy Mercy, we may faithfully obey thy Call, and that we may be wanting in no Part of that Labour, which is necessary for its bringing forth Fruit in due Season.

We are very sensible, that as the Earth being accursed through Sin, brings not forth Fruit, but in the Sweat of the Brow; so likewise that the Soul of Man is under the same Penalty, and being corrupted through Sin, requires as great Labour to become fruitful, as the Earth on which it lives.

We are sensible that our Soul naturally abounds with Thorns; with Pride, Sensuality, Sloth, Self-love, and the Love of the World; that these cannot be rooted out, nor their Growth prevented, but with great Labour. *R. We confess, O God, upon this Account there is a Necessity of great Watchfulness and Labour.*

We

Septuagesima-Sunday. 211

We are sensible that our Conversation with the World, its general Practice, its Example and Discourse, all help to confirm in us our natural Corruption and Barrenness, and that the Mischief of these cannot be prevented but with great Labour. R. *We confess, O God, upon this Account there is a Necessity of great Watchfulness and Labour.*

We are sensible how very Difficult it is, amidst such Variety of Corruption, to plant in our Souls those excellent Virtues of Charity, Humility, Purity, Patience, with all those others which the Gospel requires; and that this cannot be done but with great Labour. R. *We confess, O God, on this Account there is a Necessity of great Watchfulness and Labour.*

We are sensible that whatever Improvement we make in our Souls, we are still expos'd to so many Dangers, that all must necessarily be again overthrown, if it be not prevented by daily Labour. R. *We confess, O God, on this Account there is a Necessity of great Watchfulness and Labour.*

We are sensible our Weakness is so very great, and our Enemies so very industrious, so subtil, and so very many, that we can have no Security from certain Ruin without great Labour. R. *We confess, O God,*

on

We

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on this Account there is a Necessity of great Watchfulness and Labour.

On these and many other like Accounts, we confess, O God, there's so great a Necessity of labouring in the Vineyard, that is, in the Care of our Souls, that Idleness seems to be nothing less than the Source of Damnation, and without Labour there can be nothing hoped favourable of Eternity.

Grant therefore, O Lord, we beseech thee, that according to our many and great Necessities, so we may be watchful and laborious, that the Vineyard, into which thou hast called us to labour, may not be ruin'd for want of our Care. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That it may not be exposed to Beasts of Prey for want of our keeping a due Fence about it. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That it may not become barren for want of pruning, or cutting off what is superfluous, and hinders its bringing forth Fruit. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

That it may not be over-grown with Briars and Thorns, through want of our Labour, through our Carelessness or Neglect. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Mercifully hear us, O Lord, we beseech thee, in these Particulars, that we may not be wanting in so great a Charge, to
which

which thou hast called us. We see plainly there's an absolute Necessity of labouring where the Soil is so very Difficult and Barren, where there are so many Things to hinder the Growth of whatever is planted; and therefore that it must be a great Crime to be idle, where there is so much Work to be done.

Have therefore Regard to us, O thou heavenly Husbandman, to whom the Vineyard belongs; and since thou hast called us to work in it, mercifully grant us such a Spirit, as is necessary for the Charge, to which we are called.

Grant us, we beseech thee, a laborious Spirit. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Care and Industry. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Watchfulness. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Consideration, to examine what we have to do. *R. Amen.*

A Spirit solicitous to perform well, whatever we have to do. *R. Amen.*

Grant us, O God, we beseech thee, such a Spirit, that being thus mercifully assisted by thy Grace, both in Proportion to our Weakness, and to our Work, we may faithfully perform, what we have undertaken; and at the Evening of our Life, wait for the Hire thy Goodness has promised to us.

And

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And since thou hast here informed us, that all are not called into the Vineyard at the same Time, but some very early, even from their Youth; others latter, in the Middle of their Days; others in the Evening, when old Age has made the Time of their Labour but short; grant we may not disturb ourselves about the Time of our being called, neither presuming upon the many Years of our Labour, nor losing our Hope upon the Shortness of it, but only be solicitous upon this one Point, of being faithful in our Labour, from the Time of our being called.

This thy Mercy and Justice demand of us; for though to be idle before our Call, must be set down as a great Misfortune, yet to be idle after it, must be certainly the greater Crime; and therefore being truly sensible of this Injustice, we here humble ourselves in thy Presence, confessing to thee the long Time we have stood idle, even after thou hadst manifested thy Will to us, and called us to work.

O God! how many Months, and even Years, are now past, since thy Mercy first called upon us to labour in thy Vineyard, and thy heavenly Light discovered to us the many Duties, in which we were to labour! How many are these Years, and how very little have we truly laboured!

How

How many Months have gone over us, wherein we have lived unmindful of the Labour, to which we were called? How long have we neglected the Vineyard, and left it open to the Rapine of wild Beasts? How long have we busied ourselves in running after Vanities and Folly, and left the Vineyard to the Barrenness and Deformity of a Wilderness?

Very great, O God, has been our Injustice in this Point, by which we have grievously sinned and provoked thy Anger against us. But behold, now humbling ourselves in the Confusion of our Guilt, we implore thy Mercy, and beseech thee to forgive us. Forgive us, O God of Mercy, and through the infinite Merits of thy only Son, let this our Iniquity be blotted out. It has been our great Sin, that we have so long neglected our Charge; but have Mercy on us now, we beseech thee, and give us such powerful Grace, that we may no longer stand idle, nor admit of any farther Delays, after this thy Call.

We acknowledge this thy Mercy to us, by which we are at present put in Mind, not only of our past Neglects but likewise of thy Summons, which now calls us to Work. Grant, O God, we may obey this Summons, and enter seriously upon the Work

How

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Work which we have so long undertaken, and so long neglected. R. *Amen.*

Grant we may carry it on with such Resolution, that no Flatteries of the Flesh or the World may any more prevail with us, either to interrupt or delay it. R. *Amen.*

Grant we may not cease to work, as long as we observe any Evil remaining in us. R. *Amen.*

Grant we may not be tired or discouraged, though after all our Labour we still find surprizing Evils appearing in us. R. *Amen.*

Grant we may labour all our Lives, since, as long as we live, there will be still a Necessity of labouring. R. *Amen.*

Grant that amongst all our Labour, thy Promises may ever support our sinking Minds, and encourage us with Hope. R. *Amen.*

Grant these our Petitions, O God, and let no Weakness, we beseech thee, so far prevail in us, as to put us out of the Method, we now see to be so necessary for us. We see an absolute Necessity of labouring in the Affairs of our Souls, and that an idle Life is so contrary to our Profession, that it cuts off all Hopes of that recompense, which is given only to Labourers.

Let thy Grace therefore, O God, now apply us to our Work ; now at this Time

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Sexagesima-Sunday. 217

when the Church calls us to Labour and Penance, may we be asham'd of all the Ways of Idleness, and so persevere with the Endeavours of an Industrious Spirit, as to hold on amidst all Temptations and Discouragements; till the Evening comes, when thou shalt call the Labourers to receive their Hire. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, mercifully hear the Prayers of thy People; that we, who are justly afflicted for our Sins, may for the Glory of thy Name be mercifully deliver'd. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Sexagesima-Sunday.

Luke viii. 4, 15.

THis Day's Gospel proposing to us the Parable of the Sower, whose Seed falling upon the Way-side, upon a Rock, and among Thorns, brought not forth Fruit, and this Seed being expounded by Christ to be the Word of God; let us beg, this Day, that

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this Part of the Parable may not be verified in us, and that the Seed of God's Word may not thus be sow'd in vain in our Hearts.

Let us pray.

WE acknowledge it, O God, an Argument of thy infinite Love to us, that thou hast manifested thy holy Word to us; that thou hast discover'd to us thy Will, shew'd us the Way of Faith, and of thy Commandments, taught us the Paths of Justice, and of Life eternal; that we have Opportunities of this Seed being sown in our Hearts by Reading and by Hearing; that thou often speakest to our Hearts by good Thoughts, by communicating to us new Light, Inclinations and Desires of Good.

These, O God, are the Effect of thy Mercy to us, and being so much good Seed, we beg thy Grace to prepare our Heart to receive it; and not only to receive it, but so that there may be no kind of Indisposition found in us, to hinder the due Growth of this Seed, and prevent that Fruit, which is expected from it.

First therefore, O Blessed Lord, we ask this Grace of thee, that our Heart may not be like the High-way, where the Seed that falls is soon trampled under

der Foot, or devour'd by the Birds of the Air.

We beg our Hearts may not thus lie open without a Fence, and without being accustom'd to any Kind of Recollection. For we see plainly there's no need of morf, for rendering all the Seed ufelefs; however good it be, that is fown in our Hearts.

The Number and Diversity of worldly Affairs, the continual Agitation of Buſineſs, the Succeſſion of Employments, though with no Appearance of Evil, the new Projects which follow cloſe one upon another, the Circle of Divertiſements, of Amuſements, and of Vanity, are enough to lay the Heart open to the Reſemblance of a High-way, to make void all good Deſigns, and take from it all the divine Seed.

Grant us therefore, O God, ſuch a Spirit of Diſcretion, that, amidſt the Buſineſs and Entertainments of the World, we may be careful to cut off all Degrees of Exceſs, and keep all in that due Moderation, that we may preſerve an inward Calm of Mind, and ſuch a ſeaſonable Recollection of Spirit, that whatever good Seed is fown in our Hearts, may not be trampled on or devour'd, but be fruitful to Life eternal.

A Second Petition we make to thee, O Lord, that our Hearts may not be like the
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Stones,

Stones, where the Seed falling and shooting forth, was soon dried up for want of Moisture.

For this End we must earnestly beseech thy Goodness, to preserve us from all Hardness of Heart, and from every Thing that is capable of hard'ning us against the Motions of thy Grace, and the Impressions of thy holy Law.

We know ill Customs have this ill Effect upon the Heart, to harden it against all the Attempts of Good, and to put it in Danger of despising whatever Proposals can be made for its Advantage: Deliver us therefore, we beseech thee, from all sinful Customs, and may it be our daily Endeavour to stand against them.

We know too the Excess of any Passion is apt to harden the Heart; and though under this Indisposition it may receive the Seed of God's Word, yet with little Hopes of Fruit, whilst the Violence of Passion hinders it from taking Root. Deliver us therefore, we beseech thee, from all immoderate Passion, and may it be our daily Endeavour to be watchful against it, that so we may not be harden'd against thy Word.

See, O Lord, my Heart before thee, is as Earth without Water; may the Dew of thy Grace fall upon it, and make it
spring

spring forth into a Fountain of Tears of true Penance.

Another Petition we make to thee, O God, that our Hearts may not be like the Ground, in which Thorns, growing up with the Corn, choak'd it.

And since thou, O Jesus, hast here expounded thy own Words, and declar'd, that by the *Thorns*, here mention'd, are signified the *Riches*, and *Pleasures*, and *Cares* of this World; that these choak up the Corn, and hinder it from coming to Perfection; grant we may be watchful against these, so that they never take Root in our Hearts.

Grant we may be ever upon the Guard, and fearful of these three Passions, since whatever Arguments we can find to justify them, we have reason enough from thy Words to fear them: It is thou, O Jesus, the eternal Truth, hast positively declar'd them to be Thorns; what must it be to dispute after this, but the Effect of a still greater Passion, even of a harden'd Heart, of Blindness and Infidelity?

And what if with a Heart thus disorder'd, there be found at times a Love of God's Word, a Desire to hear it, and a lively Sense of Duty upon hearing it? What if the Heart be sometimes mov'd with good Desires, and some good Works appear? This may be enough to flatter a Soul with

Hopes, that is willing to be deceived : But, O God, how far is this from that solid Peace, which ought to be the Comfort of a Christian Soul !

For is not this the very Thing here declared that the Thorns grow up with the good Seed, and that for a Time they subsist together ? That with the Love of *Riches* and *Pleasures*, and with the *Excess of Cares*, there may *good Seed* not only *appear* but even *grow too*. But where is the Hopes, where the Comfort of this, when the very next Declaration is, that such good Seed, thus growing up, will come to nothing, but be choak'd up by the Thorns, that grow together with it ?

This being the Fate of the good Seed amongst Thorns, preserve us, we beseech thee, O merciful Lord, from these Thorns : Banish from our Hearts the Love of Money, the immoderate Desire of worldly Interest and Gain, and grant we may not in this Point impose upon ourselves, by making a Defence for Covetousness under the Cover of providing for Necessaries. Deliver us, O God, from this Thorn.

Shew Mercy likewise in helping us to root out of our Hearts all immoderate Love of Pleasure, and in taking from us the Desire of a soft, idle, and effeminate Life. Grant we may with Resolution deny ourselves

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in all such Inclinations, since yielding to these, is encouraging the growing of those Thorns, which will choak up the Seed of eternal Life.

Deliver us likewise from all Excess of worldly Sollicitude, and give us such a Christian Moderation, that while we satisfy Justice by being Faithful to the Obligations of our State, we may not exceed our Bounds, nor open our Hearts, under the Pretence of Care, to all the Confusion of a solicitous Spirit.

Shew Favour to us, O Blessed Lord, in the Grant of these Petitions, because those Evils are the greater Snares which are consistent with some Degrees of Piety, and bear not the Characters of open Wickedness in their Face. Hence, O God, we have Reason to fear ourselves; and this the more, because thou hast declared them to be of such pernicious Nature, that wherever the Heart is open to them, it becomes like a barren Soil; and tho' it has the best Seed sown upon it, yet still remains without Fruit.

O God! How unhappy is that State, where the Heart remains thus Barren, and the Seed of eternal Life becomes no Improvement to it! Deliver us, we beseech thee, from this Unhappiness.

And if it be thy blessed Will, grant that our Hearts, through the Power of thy

Grace, may become like good Ground, which receiving the Seed, brings forth Fruit an hundred Fold.

Let it be therefore thy Mercy to us, to give us a good and sincere Heart, such as is sensible of its Corruption and Barrenness, groans under the Weight of its own Misery, and sighs for the Establishment of thy Grace.

Give us such a Heart, as esteems it a Happiness to receive the Seed of thy Word, and therefore hungers after it; such a Heart, as is watchful in keeping it, by meditating on thy Law, Day and Night; such a Heart, as brings forth the Fruit of it in Patience, waiting thy Time, and with Resolution standing Faithful amidst the Combats, whether of its own Corruption, or from the Malice of Men.

We cannot but tremble, O God, when we reflect how very little Fruit we bring forth, and hence have Reason to fear, that we are not that good Ground which makes plentiful Returns of the good Seed, that is sown upon it. Give us therefore, we beseech thee, thy Blessing, that our Hearts may be no longer a barren Soil, that they may not lie open like a High-way, nor be harden'd like Stones, nor over-grown with Thorns, but that, like good Ground, they may receive thy holy Word and Light, and bring forth a hundred Fold. *Amen.*

Let

Let us pray.

O God, who seeſt that we place not our
Trust in any Action of our own,
mercifully grant, that, under the Protec-
tion of the Doctor of the Gentiles, we
may be defended againſt all Adverſities.
Thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt thy Son, our
Lord.

Quinquagesima-Sunday.

Luke xviii. 32, 33.

IN this Day's Gospel Jeſus Chriſt declares
to his Apoſtles, that he was to be appre-
hended and deliver'd as a Malefactor into the
Hands of the Gentiles; that he was to be
Scourg'd, Mock'd, and Spit upon, and then
put to Death, and this being made Choice of
by the Church for our Inſtruction this Day,
let us beg of Almighty God, that now we may
duly conſider the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the
Cause of his Humiliation, and thus prepare
for the due Obſervation of the two Days fol-
lowing, and likewise of the Time of Lent,
into which we are now entering.

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Let us pray.

O God, by whose Mercy and Goodness to us Sinners, we have Days and Times appointed, wherein in a more particular Manner we are call'd to make our Peace with thee, our God, and do Penance for our Sins; grant we may lay hold of this Mercy, and so make use of the Time now present and approaching, as to obtain the Effects design'd for us in their Institution.

Grant for this End we may prepare our Souls by the Lesson laid before us this Day; and so help us in the due Consideration of it, that by a true Sense of Christ's Suffering, we also may be content to suffer, and to undertake whatever Self-denials are prescrib'd for the Punishing or Reforming of Sin.

We must confess it, O blessed Jesus, very visible in thy sacred Person, how great is the Hatred God bears to Sin, and how very severe is the Punishment, with which he chastises it. We see this in the humbling Method of thy whole Life, but more remarkably in the Time of thy sacred Passion. We see it in the Garden, when thou, the God of Holiness, wast seized as a Malefactor by the insulting Violence of an incensed Multitude: We see it at the Pillar,

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Pillar, when thou, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, wast bound like a Slave at a Pillar, and scourg'd: We see it in the Court of *Herod*, and in *Pilate's* Hall, where thou, O Jesus, the eternal, increat'd Wisdom, wast reputed as a Fool, and expos'd to all the Variety of Contempt, that villainous Soldiers could invent against thee for their own Pastime: We see it on *Mount Calvary*, when thou, the Creator of all Things, the Author of Life and Death, wast nail'd on a Cross, and put to a cruel and infamous Death amongst Thieves.

This great Rigour, O God, to thy only Son, speaks too plainly thy Hatred to Sin, and thy Punishment of it. For why is it that he suffers? Has he done any Evil? Or is the Guilt of any Sin found in him? This cannot be: For he is the Innocent and Spotless Lamb; he is God himself, and therefore incapable of Sin. And why then does he suffer? He has taken upon him our Iniquities, and has offer'd himself to be the Sacrifice and Ransom for our Sin.

O Blessed God! And is thy only Son thus Punish'd for our Sin? Is it for our Sin, he is Scourg'd, and Mock'd, and Crucified? How great then is the Provocation of Sin? How intolerable the Injustice? How monstrous the Horror of it, which has thus humbled infinite Majesty,

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jesty, and cover'd the Glory of Heaven with Contempt!

And what a miserable and wretched Creature then am I, who, after such an astonishing Example of thy Love for Man, and of thy Abhorrence of Sin, have liv'd so many Years, not afraid of Sin, but still adding every Day Sin to Sin, still encreasing my Iniquity, as if there were no Punishment due to it; or no Justice left, to call me to an Account for my Transgression.

What Severity of Punishment must stand prepared to fall upon me, who have been so wretchedly Blind, Wicked and Ungrateful! If I look at my Redeemer Jesus, and see how Sin was punish'd in him thy Well-beloved Son, what is such a sinful Worm, such an ungrateful Traytor as I am, to expect for the Multitude of Sin, I have committed against thee!

There's enough to cast me into Despair, and this would certainly be my unhappy Lot, had not I the Prospect of my Redeemer Jesus and of his Sufferings before me. But now in his Blood I see a Victim for Sin, I see a Ransom of infinite Value paid for me, such as thou, my God, canst not refuse. In him therefore I put my whole Trust, being fully Confident, thro' him, to obtain Pardon of all my Iniquities, if for the Time to come I keep his Law, and

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and perform what he teaches. For tho' I am miserable, and of myself can do nothing worthy of thy Acceptance; yet I have this Assurance, that whatever I do, in Obedience to the Command of my Redeemer, in his Name, and in Union with him, will certainly be acceptable in thy Sight, O God.

As therefore the wonderful Sufferings of my Redeemer shew me the Grievousness of Sin, and of mine in particular; so they give me Comfort amidst the Multitude of all my Iniquities, in shewing me the Ground of my Hope, and teaching me by what Method I am to use Endeavours for working out my Salvation.

They shew me that Punishment is due to Sin from the divine Justice; they call upon me to take up my Cross daily, and to follow him; they call upon me as his Disciple, to follow his Steps; to follow the Example, he has left us in his Suffering; they call upon me to forsake, to renounce all Things of this World for his Sake; to hate my Life in this World, to suffer together with him, to enter into the Fellowship of his Sufferings, to die to the World, and to be nail'd to the Cross, and die with him.

They shew me in the rigorous Punishment of Sin, how much I am to labour for overcoming all the Evils of Sin, to
which

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which I am unhappily subject; that I am to deny myself, mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, be temperate in all Things, keep my Body in Subjection, crucify my Flesh, fight against the evil Spirits with Fasting and Prayer, cut off whatever gives Offence, tho' it be as dear as a Hand or an Eye, not to live to myself, to put off the old Man with all his corrupt and deceitful Lusts.

These Lessons are taught me in the Passion of Christ; and therefore if I am his Disciple, I must think of Living by his Spirit; I must think it Just, that Sin should be punish'd; and being, by his Mercy, a Member of his mystical Body, must endeavour that the Member be united to its Head; I must labour to overcome Sin, and esteem nothing too hard, that may be a Means for gaining this Victory. And what then is it I do? It is now a Time, wherein I am call'd to take part with the divine Justice, and to punish Sin: 'Tis now I am call'd to consider my present Evils, and to use Means for bringing the whole Man into Subjection to God.

This is certainly a great Mercy to me, and I ought to look upon it as the Time of my Visitation, which the divine Goodness grants me, for seeking the Things that are for my Peace, and that I may not be cut off in the Midst of my Iniquities. If I lay hold of it, who knows but God may

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may accept my Endeavours, and pardon my Sins? But if I neglect it, who knows but the like Mercy may never reach me, and that the Neglect of this may be the Loss of Eternity.

Wherefore, O God, in Consideration of this thy Mercy, and of my own unhappy State, to which my Sins have brought me, I here manifest my Desires before thee, of laying hold of this Time: It is what I purpose through thy Grace, and most humbly beg thy Assistance for doing it in such a manner, as may be for the eternal Peace of my Soul.

'Tis too long I have neglected Eternity, and follow'd the Ways of Self-love, of the World, and of Sin: Now, O Blessed Jesus, I desire to turn to thee, and take thee for my Guide. The World favours Sin, and infinite Ways encourage it; but at the same time, I see how severely it is punish'd in thee: As far as I have hitherto join'd with the World, so far, O Blessed Redeemer, I desire now to take Part with thee.

'Tis now time Sin should be punish'd; it is punish'd in thee, who art my Example; let it now also be punish'd in me, who am the Offender. Let rebellious Flesh now feel what it is to offend its God, and by Self-denials be brought to understand, what has been the Guilt of all its

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its sinful Liberties; let now Corruption be Humbled, which has taught me to Rebel; let it now be made to Obey, which has hitherto exercis'd a Tyranny over me.

This, O God, I own is necessary for me in my unhappy State, and 'tis what I now desire to undertake. But thou know'st my Weakness, that I cannot do this without the Help of thy Grace; help me therefore, I beseech thee, and give me Grace now to stand against all the usual Demands of Nature and the World, to pursue my Resolution of punishing Sin, and not to be discourag'd in it, notwithstanding all the Difficulties that may attend it. I have follow'd Nature in sinning, let me now follow thee, O Jesus, in the Punishment of Sin, and may thy sacred Passion be daily Help to me.

Let us pray.

Mercifully hear our Prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee; and being freed from the Bonds of our Sins, preserve us from all Adversity. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

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 Low-Sunday.

John xx. 19, 31.

THE Subject of this Gospel is an Account of Jesus appearing to his Disciples, and giving them the Blessing of Peace; Pax vobis: Hence let us make it our Petition, this Day, that we also may partake of this Blessing, and find the Peace of Christ in our Souls.

Let us pray.

EVer Blessed Redeemer, who, upon thy arising from the Dead, didst first salute thy Apostles with the Blessing of Peace: Mercifully grant, that we, who have now celebrated the Memory of thy Glorious Resurrection, may find the Effect of it in our Souls, in the Possession of thy Peace.

Thy Peace, O Jesus, we ask, and 'tis that Peace, which the World cannot give. 'Tis a Peace, which confirms our Soul against the Terrors of Sin, and of the World, and of Death, and amidst all Kind of Disorders, which disturb an inconstant World, still preserves a Calm.

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We do not ask to be free from all Trouble, from Necessities, Persecution or Pain. No, Blessed Lord, such an Exemption is not to be expected or desir'd by thy Followers. Thou hast promis'd them another Portion; and that is, in many Tribulations, in Mourning, and in great Variety of difficult Trials.

Hence, O Lord, we do not expect to be free from Troubles, as long as we shall be Pilgrims in this mortal Life; for, according to the Disposition of thy Providence, we know, where ever we go, or whatever we propose, we shall never enjoy a long Rest; but shall ever meet with some Trouble or other, to give us Disquiet. So that, tho' we may easily change Places, yet still this Condition of Life remains unchangeable; Troubles will still attend us, and a long Quiet is not to be expected.

Since this, O Lord, is according to thy Will; Lord, thy Will be done in us thy Servants; we ask nothing contrary to what thou hast ordain'd; for we know, all thy Ordinances are Just and Holy, and we cannot complain of them, without a Crime.

But since, amidst all the various Exercises of an uneasy Life, thou, O Jesus, hast a Blessing of Peace to give thy Followers; we now make this our Petition to thee; *Lord Jesus, grant us thy Peace.* Grant, that, while we are here toss'd with
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a Succession of Storms, we may still enjoy a lasting Calm in thee.

For this end, we ask of thee, O Blessed Redeemer, that we may not seek Rest, nor place our Comfort, in any Thing of this Life; neither in the Plenty of this World, nor in temporal Blessings, nor in the Favour of Men, nor in their good Opinion of us, nor in any Preferments or Satisfactions, which this World affords.

In none of these, O Lord, may we place our Comfort; since all these being very uncertain, and subject to great Changes, 'tis impossible any Peace in them can be secure or lasting, but it must necessarily be expos'd to as many Changes, as they are. And 'tis, we confess, hence arise our great Afflictions of this Life, that we make those Things our Comforts, which are in themselves changeable, and cannot be lasting to us.

Wherefore, O Lord, being convinc'd, that all the Peace of this World is inconstant and deceitful, we beg of thee thy Peace, which is better founded; we beg thy Grace, for seeking that Peace, which is built on a sure Foundation, such as cannot fail us, but continues ever the same for all Eternity.

This, O God, we ask of thee, and we heartily desire it; but we acknowledge, the Practice is very difficult, and requires
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a very powerful Grace for our Help. For, while we are here amidst sensible Things, our corrupt Nature strongly inclines us to some of them: We are eager in seeking, pleas'd in possessing, and fearful of losing them. There are other Things we dislike, and whenever these come to our Share, it is not without Vexation and Trouble. And being in these unhappy Circumstances, how shall we expect Peace, amidst such strong and various Inclinations, except thou, O God, com'st in to our Assistance, and by the Power of thy Grace, confirm'st us against our own Weakness?

Come therefore, O Blessed Lord, and help us in this our difficult State: And while we are in the Midst of Creatures, teach us a better Lesson, than to let our Peace or Trouble depend on them. Teach us to use them, as thou hast appointed, and to be moderate under whatever Dispensation comes to our Share. But as for the substantial Comfort of our Life, let not this depend on Creatures, but, O God, on thee alone, who art unchangeable.

In order to this, give us thy Grace, to make it our daily and constant Endeavour, to be faithful in our Duty, whatever belongs to our State, both as to thee, our God, and likewise to our Neighbour. In this, O Blessed Lord, let neither Sloth, nor any Difficulties, nor Love of Diver-

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tisement, be any Hindrance: And in this Fidelity may we learn to place one daily Part of our Comfort.

On this may we build one Part of our Peace, so as not to be troubled upon any Reproof, or dejected at the Opinion of Men; but still to retain an inward Satisfaction, upon this Principle; that thou, O Lord, art Witness of what we do; and that while thou know'st our Fidelity, the Concern is not great, whether others believe it, or no.

Another Petition we make to thee, that not only as to the particular Obligations of our State, but likewise in all other Respects, we may be ever careful to preserve a good Conscience, so as to avoid all wilful Transgressions of thy Commandments, and never do any Thing knowingly to displease thee.

Upon this Principle may we build another Part of our daily Peace, amidst the various Reports, ill Constructions, and malicious Attempts of Men; making this a perpetual Comfort, that thou know'st our Conscience: That thou, O God, and not the World, art to be our Judge; and that if the World be severe to us, and Calumnies be not wanting to oppress us, we have still a greater Expectation from thee, who hast promis'd to be the Protector of the Innocent, and promis'd
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a Blessing to such as suffer for Justice sake.

A Third Petition we make ; That, as thou, O Jesus, hast commanded us to deny our own Wills, so we may never place our Happiness in doing our own Will, but in doing thine, or rather, in thine being done in us. Help us, O God, in studying this Principle of the Gospel, and understanding it to be so just and reasonable, and so much for our greatest Interest, as to desire this, above all Things, that thy holy Will be done, and to make this ever the Centre of our Comfort.

Upon this Principle, O God, may we perfect all our Comfort upon Earth, amidst the various Troubles to which we are expos'd in this deceitful and uncertain World : So that whatever happens uneasy or afflicting to us, we may still preserve Peace in our Souls, upon the Consideration, that it is thy holy Will, it should be so : Nay, in this, O God, may we learn, amidst all our Inclination to Disquiet, to conceive a certain Joy of Faith, in as much as not our Will is done, which is blind, rash and foolish, but thy Will, O Lord, which, above all, is most Wise, most Holy, and ever doing that, which is best. May this, O God, give Comfort amidst all Discomforts, so as even then to rejoice, when the World pities us, as miserable, and never

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to think ourselves unhappy, as long as all, that happens, is the fulfilling of thy Will, and must certainly turn to our Good, if we embrace it with a due Submission to thee.

Help us, O Lord, in laying this Foundation of a solid Peace in our Souls, and building our Comfort upon Principles, that cannot fail us. 'Tis the Want of this, that has been hitherto our Misfortune. We have sought Comfort in the Things of this World; in the Favour of Men; in the Good Will and Good Words of others; and whenever these have turn'd against us, either in reproving us, or speaking to our Prejudice, or taking Part against us; our whole Souls have been in Disorder, and our Comforts have been succeeded by Bitterness.

We have sought Satisfaction in the Objects of our Senses, of our corrupt Inclinations, and of Self-love; in our worldly Proposals, in our Advantages above our Neighbour, and in temporal Blessings; in these we have esteem'd ourselves happy; and then, upon any Change, Loss or Disappointment, how have we complain'd of our hard Fate and esteem'd the most miserable, happier than ourselves?

Thus, O God, it has been too often with us, by misplacing our Comforts, and seeking Rest in changeable Things. But
now,

now, O Blessed Jesus, hear us, we beseech thee, and grant, we may learn, by our own Folly, to be more Wise; grant, we may seek that Peace, which cannot deceive us, and be careful in building our Comfort upon a better Foundation, than hitherto we have done.

'Tis only thou, O God, art the true Happiness of our Souls, and all Comforts out of thee, are false. Wherefore, O most Gracious Lord, we ask this Mercy of thee, to raise our Hearts so far above the World, as not to place our Comfort in it, but in thee only our only Good our sovereign Lord, and our God.

May it be our daily Concern, to be faithful in the Obligations of our State; to keep a good Conscience in all other Things, and esteem it our Happiness, that thy Will is done. And in this may our Peace be constant and unchangeable, even though the World be in Confusion, or be raising Storms against us: This Peace, grant us, O Jesus, for 'tis a Peace, which the World cannot give.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we who have observ'd the Paschal Solemnities, may, through thy Grace, manifest the Effects of them in our Morals
and

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and Life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
thy Son.

Second Sunday after Easter.

John x. II, 16.

*I*N this Day's Gospel Christ declares, That
He is the Good Shepherd ; and that his
Sheep hear his Voice, know him, and
follow him. *Let us this Day join, in ac-
knowledging Christ to be the Good Shepherd,
and likewise add our Petitions, that we may
hear his Voice, and follow him, that so we
may ever be of his Fold.*

Let us pray.

O Blessed Jesus, behold, here in thy
Presence, we own the Truth, which
thou hast declar'd.

We confess to the whole World, Thou
art the Good Shepherd, which hast given
thy Life for the Sheep.

Thou cam'st from Heaven, and being
God Eternal, didst become Man, that to
thou might'st seek us.

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We

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We are all, as Sheep, gone astray ; by Sin lost to God, and in Despair of ever returning to our Fold.

But by thy Mercy we have been found again ; and nothing has been left undone by thee, which could contribute to our Good.

Thou hast invited us by thy Goodness, to forsake our evil Ways, and both by Word and Example hast shew'd us the Ways of Peace.

Thou hast offer'd thyself to become a Light to our wand'ring Steps, and hast given us Notice of all the Snares prepar'd for our Ruin.

Thou hast subjected thyself to the Vilest of all Humiliations, for our Encouragement ; and hast refus'd no Difficulties, that might be for our Good.

Thou hast both pray'd, and watch'd, and fasted for us, and hast express'd as much Sollicitude for our Salvation, as if thy own Happiness had depended on ours.

Thou hast prepar'd a Banquet for our Souls, and given thy Body and Blood for our Food and Strength.

Thou hast taken upon thee our Sins ; so that, we being the Offenders, thou hast the Punishment.

Thou

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Thou hast offer'd thyself for the Ransom of our Iniquities, and hast received the Stripes, that we might be heal'd.

Thou hast given thy Life for our Redemption, and made our Peace, by the Effusion of thy Blood.

Thou hast rescued us from the Power of Hell, and fastned to the Cross, the Hand-writing, that was against us.

Thou hast rais'd us to a new Life by thy Death, and open'd to us Heaven Gates, which our Sins had shut against us.

Thou, O Blessed Jesus, thou hast given thy Life for thy Sheep, and therefore we acknowledge thee to be the Good Shepherd.

We confess thee to be the Shepherd of our Souls: We have no Health or Life, but through thee.

We are nothing, but Blindness, and except thou be our Guide, we shall certainly lose our Way.

We have no Cure of our Infirmities, but through thee; and if thou heal'st us not, we must certainly perish.

We have many Wolves, that lie in wait to devour us; and if thou be not our Defender, we shall certainly become their Prey.

We have Death and Damnation before us; and except thou be our Deliverer,

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we cannot escape being for ever miserable.

We have neither Comfort, nor Light, nor Strength, nor Hope, nor Redemption, but in thee, and through thee, O Jesus, Blessed for evermore.

Grant therefore, we beseech thee, O merciful Lord, that, as we confess thee to be the true Shepherd, and nothing has been wanting in thee, to fill up that Character : So we may truly become thy Sheep, and nothing may be wanting, which belongs to those, whom thou hast chosen into thy Fold : That so we may manifest, in some part, at least, the Greatness of the Love, thou hast shew'd to us.

Grant, O Jesus, that in all our Necessities, we may have our Eyes ever turn'd upon thee, with an entire Confidence in thy Goodness, and Hope in thy Mercy. Depending upon thee for our Deliverance in all Dangers, and for our Help in all Distress : Because those of thy Fold ought thus to depend on their Shepherd.

Grant, O Jesus, the Good Shepherd of our Souls, that in Time of all Difficulties, where Darkness or Uncertainty attends us ; where the Case seems perplex'd, and we know not the Way, we are to take : Grant, that in all such Doubts, we may ever turn our Eyes upon thee, to observe the Direction thou giv'st us ; to ob-

serve

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serve where thy Glory invites us, where thy Will leads us, or where thy Precepts command us: Thus, O Jesus, may we ever be depending on thy Conduct; because those of thy Fold ought thus to depend on their Shepherd.

Grant, O Jesus, the Good Shepherd of our Souls, that in all our Infirmities and sinful Passions, in all our Weakness and Dulness, in all our inward and outward Disorders we may ever turn our Eyes towards thee for our Help; that we may call upon thy Mercy to heal us, and enquire what are the Means, thy Goodness has appointed for our Relief and Strength: And whatever Means we use, may our Dependance not be in our own Endeavours, but on thy Grace and Blessing; because those of thy Fold ought thus to depend on their Shepherd.

But what, above all Things, we ask of thee, O Jesus, is, That we may hear thy Voice, and follow thee. For here, we confess, is our great Difficulty, in the unhappy Circumstance of our Life. For thou know'st, O God, while thou callest, how many others we have likewise calling upon us; and this, with so much more Danger to us, in as much as they call to what is agreeable and pleasing to us; and thou call'st us to Things, that are difficult

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to Flesh and Blood, and to which we have a natural Dislike.

In this the World has a great Part, in calling upon us, at all Times; in undertaking to prescribe and order every Thing, that belongs to human Life; and even presuming to expound thy Law, and to pronounce upon what thou hast commanded, allowing as far as it thinks fit, and censuring all, beyond such Bounds of its own erecting, as ridiculous.

Besides this we have our own sinful Passions, our corrupt Will, our evil Inclinations, our vain and perverse Humours, our ill Customs, our Prejudices, and blind Self-love; we have all these calling upon us, and by strong Motives pleading for the Reasonableness of whatever they propose: So that nothing can be offer'd to our Consideration, but some of these are still putting in for Counsellors; and not only endeavour to persuade, but even with a Sort of Violence, press us to follow their Direction.

In these difficult Circumstances, O Jesus, we are placed all the Time of this our mortal Life; and therefore we have great Reason to beg thy Grace, that we may hear thy Voice, and follow thee, and not be deceiv'd by any of those flattering Evils, which, on all Occasions, are calling upon us.

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Be merciful therefore to us, we beseech thee, and grant us this Grace; that amidst all the Suggestions of the World, or of our own Corruption, we may know thy Voice, give Ear to what thou speak'st, and ever walk as thou directest.

This Grace, O Blessed Redeemer, we ask with all the Earnestness of our Souls; because the only solid Comfort of our present Life, and our everlasting Happiness depends on the Grant of this our Request.

For what, O God! What can be the Fruit of our hearing the Calls of the World, or our own Corruption! What can it be, but only to please ourselves in passing Trifles, and for momentary Satisfaction, to draw upon our Heads thy eternal Displeasure.

The World proposes no more than what is present, and draws its Admirers to the Contempt or Forgetfulness of thy Judgments: And what can be the End of this, but to sacrifice all to the World, and be at length excluded from Mercy?

And now, while the World prepares its Followers for this hard Lot; have not we reason to be afraid of being deluded by it? Have we not reason to cry out, Lord Jesus, grant we may rather hear thee, than the World: Thou call'st us to Life eternal; and the World shews the Way to

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everlasting Death: O Divine Jesus, the Good Shepherd, give us Grace to hear thee, and not the World. For if we hear not thy Voice, and do not follow where thou call'st, we cannot belong to thy Fold; we are not thy Sheep, and we lose the Benefit of all thou hast done.

This is what, above all Things, we ought to fear; and therefore for our greater Security and Comfort, in this important Point, we implore so far the Favour of thy Grace, as to discover in ourselves the Marks of thy Flock, and that our Feet are directed in the Ways of thy Commandments.

Grant we may find in our Hearts the true Love of our Brethren and Neighbours; for this is one Mark of thy Fold, and 'tis by loving one another, we are to be known to belong to thee.

Grant we may find ourselves to be humble and meek, which thou hast commanded us to learn of thee, and which is another Mark of thy Fold.

Grant we may love nothing of this World more than thee; and that for thy Sake, or rather than offend thee, we may renounce whatever we possess of this World; for this is another Mark.

Grant we may hear those, whom thou hast put over us; and not only hear thy Word, but also keep it, by making thy
Gospel

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Gospel the Rule of our Lives, avoiding all that can give Offence, doing all to Edification, walking worthy of our Vocation, and endeavouring to live by thy Spirit, O Jesus; for this is another Mark.

Hear us, O merciful Redeemer, in these our Petitions, and since we can have no Life or Hope, but through thee; and yet can expect nothing through thee, if we are not of thy Fold: Grant us this Grace, that we may be ever solicitous to examine ourselves, and never give Rest to our Souls, till we find in ourselves the comfortable Marks of thy Flock, and thus live under thy present Protection, and in Hopes of coming to that Life of Happiness, which, by thy Blood, thou hast purchas'd for us.

Let us pray.

O God, who by the Humiliation of thy only Son, hast rais'd up the fall'n World, grant to thy Faithful, perpetual Comfort; that having been deliver'd by thee from everlasting Death, they may be establish'd by thee in the Possession of Life everlasting. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Third Sunday after Easter.

John xvi. 16, 22.

IN this Day's Gospel, Christ tells his Apostles, He was soon to depart from them, and go to his Father; that they were to be left upon Earth a little while, and their Portion should be in Weeping and Mourning, while the World should be in Joy: But however, that he would see them again, and then their Mourning should be turn'd into Joy. Hence let us pray, we may be ever mindful, That Suffering was the Portion of the Apostles; That we may submit to whatever Part of it comes to our Share, and be comforted under all Suffering, in the Hopes of the future Joy, which is promis'd.

Let us pray.

O Blessed Redeemer, we must confess it here before thee, this Day, that we see plainly, what was the Legacy thou left'st to thy Apostles, at thy going out of the World. Thou didst not follow the common Method of worldly Parents and Friends,

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Friends, who testify their Care and Love, by leaving Legacies of worldly Goods and Possessions, so to provide for a present Welfare.

No, Blessed Jesus, though thou wast Lord of the World, and could'st have dispos'd of the whole Earth, for the Comfort of thy Friends; yet nothing of this has any Part in thy Will. Thou leavest worldly Goods, and present Happiness, to those who are of the World; but having chosen thy Apostles out of the World, thou providest for them a better Legacy, even of eternal Goods, and Joys everlasting.

But as for what belongs to this World, thou leavest nothing of this to them, but only such Things, as the World hates and avoids; nothing but Reproaches, Persecution, and the Cross; nothing but Weeping and Mourning: *You shall have Sadness; you shall Mourn and Weep; but the World shall rejoice.*

And now, O Divine Saviour, this thy Legacy of Suffering, left to thy Apostles, being so evident; we ask of thee the Blessing of thy Grace, that the Remembrance of this may be some Help to us, whenever any Trouble befalls us.

For we confess to thee a great Weakness, to which we are subject in this Point. We are very sensible, how great a Virtue
Patience

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Patience is ; we know, how beneficial it is to ourselves, and how acceptable to thee ; we know the Promises, thou hast made to such as suffer with Patience, and hence are ever forward in advising our Friends, whom we see in Trouble, to bear it with Patience, and not to lose the fair Opportunity, they have in their Hands, of engaging thy Divine Mercy to them.

This, O God, we know, and thus we preach to others ; but when any Trouble falls to our Share, then, O Jesus ! how do we, in one Moment, forget all we knew ! How small a thing is enough to put our whole Souls into disorder ! A cross Word, a seeming Contempt, an ordinary Contradiction, a little Disappointment, an inconsiderable Loss or Neglect overthrows all our Patience, and we are as much discompos'd, as if Suffering did not belong to our Profession, or there were no Fault in being impatient.

This being our great Misfortune, so soon to forget what we profess, and what thou hast promis'd ; we beseech thee, O Divine Redeemer, to remedy this in us : We beseech thee to confirm us, by thy Grace, against this Weakness, that we may not be so easily disquieted ; that we may not fall into Impatience, but may receive the Troubles of this Life, with a Christian Sub-

Third Sunday after Easter. 253

Submission, and bear them with a Christian Patience.

This, O God, must be the Effect of thy Grace, for our Nature here is very weak ; but thou, O Sovereign Lord, being the Author and Governor of all, hast our Nature subject to thee ; thou can'st govern it, as thou wilt, and strengthen it, according to thy Pleasure.

Shew therefore, we beseech thee, thy Power and Goodness in us, and leave us no more to be govern'd by Nature, as the Heathens are, but let thy Grace govern in us, giving a Check to all our Corruption, and carrying us on in the Ways of thy Gospel.

Give us Grace often to call to mind, that we are the Followers of the Apostles, and that, as we profess their Faith, so we ought to take our Part in that Cup, which thou gav'st them to Drink. For since they who were thy faithful Servants, who did abide with thee in thy Temptations, who were thy Friends, had this Portion of Suffering appointed for them ; how can we, who are ungrateful and wretched Sinners, pretend to be exempt ?

We cannot pretend, or desire any such thing, O Blessed Jesus, if we have any Faith in thee, or profess to love thee. For do not we see, this is the Dispensation of thy Fatherly Providence ? thou hadst

Mourning

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Mourning and *Joy* before thee; both equally in thy Power, to bestow according to thy Pleasure: And *Mourning* thou didst bequeath to thy Followers and Friends; but *Joy* thou didst leave to those of the World.

Now, Lord, since we know thee to be infinite in Wisdom and Goodness, must not we approve of the Settlement, thou hast made, and judge that best for us, which thou hast appointed? Or can it be reasonable after this, for us to dislike what thou hast done; and not being content with thy Orders, to make them void in us, and chuse for ourselves?

No, most Adorable Redeemer, this cannot be reasonable; we cannot do this, but by disowning and renouncing thee. And therefore, behold, here in thy Presence, I solemnly approve and accept the Portion, thou hast appointed for me; I offer myself to whatever Trials or Troubles, thou shalt ordain for me. And whenever I feel the Weight of any pressing upon me, then will I cry out; This is what our Lord has chosen for me: Bow down therefore, my Soul, and bear it with Content; for what our Lord has chosen, is best for thee.

I confess it, O Lord, I confess it: 'Tis certain thy Choice is best for me. For tho' Nature desires Ease and Content, with all the Satisfactions of Sense, of Self-love,
and

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and the World; yet I acknowledge, this is not best for me: For, I find, corrupt and worldly Joy to make a corrupt and worldly Soul; I find, all worldly Satisfaction run naturally into Excess; Prosperity, Plenty, and Ease, encrease Corruption in us, and study how to abuse thy Blessings; long Quiet effeminates the Mind, and the natural Fruit of it is Laziness and Sloth. Worldly Peace invites to the Love of the World; and to have generally our own Will, is the Encrease of Pride and Self-love.

Thus, O God, I find it is with us, through our Corruption; and therefore I do not wonder, thou hast left worldly Joy to the World; I do not wonder, thou hast not left it to those, whom thou hast chosen out of the World, to thy Followers, to thy faithful Servants and Children. Thou know'st it is not a Help, but a Hindrance to such, as are to prepare for an everlasting Happiness; and therefore while the World is in Joy, and ever seeks what delights; I own, 'tis best for me, to take my Portion with the Apostles, rather to meet with Troubles, rather to mourn with thy Disciples, than rejoice with the World.

This I have the more Reason to believe, because I see, thou, O Jesus, having the whole World at Command, didst not chuse for thyself the Joys, Peace and Comforts of the World, but only its Troubles, Sorrows,

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rows, Affliction, and Persecution: For thy whole Life was a Cross and Martyrdom. And since thou didst chuse this for thyself, and also for thy best Servants; I have great Reason to judge it best for me: And that nothing can render me more pleasing in thy Sight, than to be in the Midst of Mourning, to accept of all Troubles that belong to Human Life, with a willing Mind, and bear them with Chearfulness.

This I have Reason to judge; because to love this World, and to be in the Midst of its Satisfaction and Joy, has no Resemblance at all to thy Life, since in this thou hadst no Part; but to be in Trouble, and to bear the Cross, this, O Jesus, has a Conformity to thy Life, and therefore I question not, is well-pleasing to thee.

And this the more especially, because I find thy Promise made to thy Apostles, of their Mourning being turn'd into Joy: For this plainly shews me, that the Troubles of this Life are regarded by Heaven, and to bear them with an humble Patience, is so acceptable to God, as to be rewarded by him with the Blessing of Glory.

This, I confess, is so plain, that I have but this one Thing to do, and that is, to commit myself to thy Conduct, O Jesus, to order and dispose of all Things belonging to me, as thou pleasest; and as for
Troubles

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Troubles or Afflictions, to give me that Grace, as never more to complain, or be impatient under them. The greatest Business of my Life, is to save my Soul; and since the rejoicing of the World is a Hindrance to it, I ask for no Part of this, but rather beg, I may be ever fearful of it.

And since patient Suffering is a great Help to it; I beseech thee, O Lord, as thou art pleas'd to send many Trials, so thou would'st be pleas'd likewise to grant me Patience under them. Let me no more judge of Trouble, by what Nature suggests; but in a Case, where thou, O Jesus, hast spoken so very plain, may I take no other Judgment but thine.

May I therefore hereafter receive the Portion of thy Apostles, with an apostolick Spirit, and, under all Troubles, ever look on that everlasting Joy, which is set before me; and hence, not only be contented, but even learn to rejoice under them; for so did thy Apostles. Grant therefore, O Blessed Redeemer, that receiving my Faith from the Apostles, I may, from the same, learn how to suffer, and thus, every Day, encrease in the Hope of having my Sorrows turn'd into Joy.

Let

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Let us pray.

O God, who shew'ſt the Light of thy Truth to ſuch as go aſtray, that by it they may return into the Way of Righteouſneſs: Grant to all, who live in the Chriſtian Profeſſion, that they may avoid thoſe Things, which are contrary to this Name, and embrace what is agreeable to it. Through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thy Son.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

John xvi. 5, 14.

Chriſt, our Redeemer, having told his Apoſtles, That he was to leave them; they were, upon this, ſo concern'd, and oppreſs'd with Grief, that none of them enquired of him, whither he was going. Upon which they are reprov'd by him; but are comforted too with the Reaſons of his Departure, and with the Promise of the Holy Ghoſt. Hence let us beg of Almighty God, this Day, that he will mercifully preſerve us from all immoderate Concern, Sollicitude and Grief, that ſo our Minds may be ever at Liberty for enquiring,

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quiring, whither Christ is gone, and for considering how we are to follow him.

Let us pray.

O Merciful Father, who know'st all the Unhappiness of our Temper, and the many Weaknesses, to which we are subject; have Compassion on us, we beseech thee, and, by thy Grace, teach us so to understand and govern them, that they may not be our Hindrance in the great Work of our Salvation.

But more in particular hear our Prayers, this Day, for the good Government of all our Inclinations to immoderate Concern, Sollicitude of Grief, for the Things of this World, that we may be ever watchful against them, and keep them within such due Bounds, that if they appear enough to humble us with the Sight of our own Weakness, they may not, however, arise to that Degree, as to take off our Hearts from thee, our God, and from the Duties of Eternity.

This, O most gracious Lord, we have Reason to ask; because Experience has taught us the Narrowness of our own Hearts; and convinc'd us, how much we stand in Need of thy Help; whilst professing to love thee, and serve thee, so very little a Thing, as we find every Day, is
enough

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enough to take off our Hearts and Thoughts from all that belongs to thee.

O God! (Give us Leave to complain against ourselves) How does every ordinary Concern for the Things of this World take up our Hearts! We make Profession of being faithful to thee; and no sooner does any earthly Business appear before us but presently we forget Heaven.

We know not how to act in temporal or momentary Affairs, as if they were Temporal; but 'tis generally with that Sollicitude, as if they were of an eternal Concern to us. Our whole Soul is busied in them, and if we apply ourselves to any thing Spiritual, 'tis with such Distraction of Mind, that we confound Temporal with Eternal, and have even then the World in our Heart, while we have Heaven on our Tongue.

Thus it is too generally with us, when the Affairs are no more than ordinary; but if any thing happens of a greater Concern, such as raises in us either Anger or Grief; then, O God, how much more do we discover our Weakness! Then our Reason is captivated to Passion, and we can neither speak nor think, but in Disorder, and plainly shew that all our Light is Darkness.

Then our Faith is smother'd, we know not how to submit to thy Appointments,
nor

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nor approve what thou order'st, nor obey what thou commandest. All is Violence and Confusion, or else Darknes within us; we are not capable of Advice, we decline our best Friends, or, at least, think them unreasonable; and 'tis too often we are sullen against Heaven itself, so as not to value our Prayers, nor those Exercises, which are the best Expedients, for recovering Peace to our Souls.

This, O God, is some of our Unhappiness which we lay before thee, this Day; and implore thy Holy Grace for its Remedy. We are sensible of the many ill Effects it has in us, and how much it deserves Reproof. For, if thy Apostles are not allow'd to grieve, when Jesus is to be taken from them, and they are to be left to the Outrages of an unbelieving World; if they are reprov'd for being concern'd at this Loss, and for not making Enquiry, whither he is going: What must we deserve, who are so much disquieted, every Day, upon Trifles, and let every little Uneasiness be enough to put Jesus, and all that belongs to him, out of our Mind?

O God, this our Infirmary is such, that we cannot think of it without Shame; to see, that we, who have Eternity before us, and shou'd, every Day, prepare for entering into it, are yet so busy about other Affairs, as if our Eternity were to be in
this

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this World, and not in the next. To see, that we, who have but one Thing to fear, which is the Loss of our Souls, and of thee, our God, have yet so many other Things we apprehend, and make them so many Occasions of our Disquiet and Grief, that amongst these Disturbances, the only just Object of our Fear is lost to our Thoughts.

This is our Misfortune, O God, and being sensible, how very unreasonable it is, we now come to thee, to find Mercy and Help. Help us, therefore, O God, we beseech thee, and now, by thy Grace, so change our unhappy Temper, that we may keep a Moderation within us, as to all the Concerns of this World.

Let all our Eagerness be turn'd upon the Things of Eternity; in these may our Zeal arise, and in loving and seeking thee, our God, may we know no *Mean*. But as to all, that belongs to this momentary Life, preserve us, we beseech thee, from all Kind of Excess.

In these Things, O most Gracious Lord, teach us to be just; and in momentary Things may we always remember, the Concern is only of Moments. Hence, O God, let it be thy Mercy, to take from us all immoderate Adhesion to any Thing created. Let not our Hearts seek Happiness in Things, that are not capable of giving

Fourth Sunday after Easter. 263

ing it, nor place their Rest in such Things, as have only an uncertain Being. For whatever a blind Inclination may suggest, yet we are sure, all such immoderate Affection, as it is unjust in giving to Creatures, what belongs to thee, our God, so it is the Punishment of its own Injustice, in the Attendants of various Uneasiness, racking Sollicitudes, and frightful Apprehensions, it brings along with it, and in preparing for itself the Trouble of being separated from what it most admires.

But, besides this, we cannot but confess, that all immoderate Concern for Things created, is very injurious to us, in that Submission, which is due to thee, the sovereign Disposer of all Things. For whenever thy Orders are not agreeable to our Inclinations, we are presently in Rebellion, and seldom fail of running into some sinful Extreme.

Wherefore, O God, we again repeat our Petition to thee, that thou would'st vouchsafe to moderate all our Inclinations, Affections and Desires, as to all that is created, and bring us to that happy Temper, as to be easy under all thy Appointments, to approve thy Orders in all that belongs to us, and never to be disquieted, in whatever thou art pleas'd to change, diminish, or quite take from us.

This,

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This, O God, would be a happy Indifferency, and 'tis our great Unhappiness, that we are so little industrious, in labouring to obtain that, which is so Just in itself, and so much for our Good.

For 'tis Just, O Lord, that thou, who art supreme Governor of the Universe, shou'dst order and dispose all Things according to thy Will. Thou only know'st what is fit to be done, and, by proper Steps, canst advance the great Designs of thy Providence. Who therefore should order every Thing, but only thou, O God, who art All-wise, and whose Goodness is answerable to thy Wisdom?

But as for us, O God, such poor Creatures, as we are, what do we know? We are blind and improvident; we understand not the Things, that are for our Good; we fear the Things, that are most beneficial to us, and we are so eager, in desiring what is hurtful, that we need no more for our own Ruin, than the Grant of our own Wishes. Hence, O God, how often do we misplace our Passions; there many times mourning under the Thoughts of a Misfortune, when the very thing, we lament, is the Effect of thy particular Mercy to us? And don't we as often publish our Joy for being successful in such Affairs, as afterwards open a Gate to many Misfortunes?

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Fourth Sunday after Easter. 265

And yet thus blind as we are, how do we, every Day, undertake to prescribe to thy Providence, both in private and publick Affairs, and are rash enough, in our busy Wishes, to give Directions to thy infinite Wisdom, of what is best to be done.

O God, we confess this to be great Presumption of such blind Moles, as we are, by which we usurp upon thy Prerogative, and prepare for ourselves a Succession of Disquiets; there being nothing, that gives us greater Uneasiness, than the Disappointments of those Expectations, we have vainly rais'd to ourselves, and to find our great Dependencies come to nothing.

Grant us therefore now thy Grace, O God, we beseech thee, that having discover'd our own ill Steps, we may learn to amend them. Grant us now such an Evenness of Mind, that we may be ready to embrace all thy Appointments, that nothing may be able to bring an Oppression upon our Spirits, or cast us into Darkness. We have seen too much the ill Effects of a dejected Mind, and therefore most earnestly desire to be deliver'd from all that ill Management, which leads to it.

Rather, O Lord, may we now labour to leave ourselves, and all, whatever belongs to us, in thy Hands. Give us a Spirit wholly resign'd; for we know, this

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is the surest Way to a true and lasting Peace, such as is not subject to the Uncertainties of this World, nor depends upon the favourable Circumstances of our present Being. Such a Resignation is the Way, at all Times, and in all Occurrences, to find Comfort in thee, our God, and 'tis never so solicitous for any Thing created, as to be put out of the Way of Salvation.

How happy a State wou'd this be, in the Midst of all our Unhappiness?

Grant us this Petition, O God, and we desire no other Happiness in this Life.

Let us pray.

O God, who mak'st the Faithful to be of one Mind; grant to thy People, that they may love what thou commandest, and desire what thou promisest; that amidst the Inconstancy of this World, there our Hearts may be fix'd, where the Joys are unchangeable. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

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Fifth Sunday after Easter, or Rogation-Sunday.

John xvi. 23, 30.

IN this Gospel, Christ, our Redeemer, commands his Apostles to pray; gives them Encouragement to it, and promises, that whatever they shall ask the Father in his Name, he will grant it to them. Upon this, let us join our Petitions, that God wou'd direct us in the due Performance of this holy Exercise, that it may be to his Glory, to our present and everlasting Good: And first, that we may not neglect it.

Let us pray.

O Blessed Redeemer, who in teaching thy Apostles, hast likewise taught us, how great an Advantage we may make of Prayer, for the Relief of our Necessities, and opening the Treasure of thy Blessings upon us; grant we may learn from thy Instructions, and never be so false to our own Interest, as to neglect that, on which all our Good so very much depends.

Preserve us therefore, we beseech thee,
O Lord, from all Neglect of Prayer ;
since there can be no more evident Sign of
an unhappy State of Soul, than such Ne-
glect.

For, what must the State of that Soul
be, which being subject to many Miseries,
neglects the Remedies that are offer'd ?

Which being in the Power of an Ene-
my, will not call for the Help of that
Hand, which offers it Liberty ?

Which being encompass'd with infernal
Darkness, will not ask for the Light of
Heaven ?

Which being famish'd for want of spiri-
tual Food, will not cry out for Relief ?

Which being possess'd with many evil
Spirits, and daily with them fighting against
its God, will not seek Deliverance ?

Which being in the Way to Hell, even
to a State of endless and unchangeable
Misery, goes on in a secure Peace, and will
not call upon God, to be its Deliverer ?

Which being poor, weak, diseas'd, and
in Want of many Helps, necessary for
bringing it to the Happiness of Heaven,
goes on unconcern'd, and will not ask for
what it wants ?

O God, we confess this to be an un-
happy State, even so unhappy, that, with-
out a Change, there can be little Hopes of
that Christian, who lives on in a general ill
Custom

Custom of neglecting his Prayers? For what is this but the Contempt of Hell, the Contempt of Eternity, the Neglect of his Soul, the Neglect of Salvation, the Neglect of God?

Wherefore, O most gracious Redeemer, we appeal to thy infinite Mercy, for the Forgiveness of whatever Guilt we have hitherto contracted by such Neglect: Pardon us, we beseech thee, this great Blindness, Stupidity, and Sin; and tho' we are unworthy of what we ask, yet confiding in the Merits of thy sacred Passion, we hope to find Mercy with God.

But then, O most loving Saviour, we most humbly sue for such new Strength of Grace, as never more to fall under this Guilt. Help us therefore, O God, and according to the Sincerity of our Desires, be now assisting to us.

Preserve us from all Neglect of our Prayers. R. *Preserve us, O Lord, we beseech thee, by thy Grace.*

Grant, that thro' Sloth or Laziness, we may no more neglect our Prayers. R. *Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant, that no immoderate Sollicitude in worldly Affairs, may be any more the Occasion of neglecting our Prayers. R. *Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant, that no idle Divertisements be any more made the Occasion of neglecting

our Prayers. *R. Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant, that no unnecessary Business be any more made the Occasion of neglecting our Prayers. *R. Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant, that no Dulness of Spirit, no Grief at Misfortunes, no Passion or Anger, nor other inward Disturbance, be any more made the Occasion of neglecting our Prayers. *R. Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant, that no Love of Company, nor Tepidity, nor Coldness or Indevotion, may be any more made the Occasion of neglecting our Prayers. *R. Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Hear us, O Lord, in these Petitions, and mercifully deliver us from all those Indispositions of Mind, which have hitherto contributed to this our past Neglect; and now, by the Power of thy Grace, make us so sensible both of thy Glory, and our own true Interest, as no more to be careless in that Duty, which cannot fall under an habitual Neglect, without the evident Danger of our being eternally lost. Hear us therefore, O Jesus, and in thy Mercy grant this our Request.

Besides this, we have another Petition to make to thee, O God, and 'tis this, That thou woul'dst teach us how to pray; that thou woul'dst give us a good Spirit, such as
may

may raise our Minds, and enflame our Hearts in the Performance of this holy Exercise, so that our Prayers may ascend like Incense in thy Sight.

For this end, we beseech thee, O merciful Father, to take from us all that Dulness of Spirit, which too often attends us at our Prayers; and make us sensible, that repeating over Words, or bending our Knees, is not Prayer, except our Souls are rais'd towards thee in Sighs and Desires, and give Life to what we do.

Hence, O God, we beg of thee, that as often as we come to Prayer, we may have a Sense of thy infinite Majesty, in whose Presence the Pillars of Heaven tremble; and hence be struck with that humbling Reverence, as becomes such poor Worms, as we are, whose great Unworthiness ought not to appear before thee, without Fear.

Grant likewise, that at the same time, we may be possess'd with the true Idea of our great Misery, of our many Necessities, and infinite Dangers, with which we are encompass'd all the Time of this mortal Life, and that our only Help is from thy Goodness.

And hence, O most Sovereign Lord, may our Souls be prepar'd with all their Powers to adore thee, who art so infinitely adorable; with all their Strength to praise thee,

thee, who art infinitely worthy of all Praise; and with the loudest Cries implore thy Goodness, for the Remedy of our great Misery, and the Relief of our extreme Poverty.

In this manner teach us to appear before thee, O God, with some Life and inward Vigour of our Souls; for we confess, 'tis a Confusion to us, to look back upon ourselves, and see, in what a dull, irreverent, and senseless Manner, we have hitherto come into thy Presence.

We confess thee to be our God, who hast Power both to save, and to destroy; and yet when we have presented ourselves before thee, how often has it been with no more Sense or Reverence, than if thou wert no more than an Idol of the Heathens, and hadst no Knowledge of what we do?

We see, how infinite our Miseries, how numberless our Sins have been; and yet how often have we come before thee, with as little Concern, as if we had no dependence on thy Goodness, nor any want of thy Mercy?

This, O God, has been too much our Way; which, with Shame, we confess before thee, and most humbly beg thy Grace for the Amendment of it; that, for the Time to come, as often as we pray, it may always be, in a manner becoming

coming our Misery, and thy infinite Majesty; that is, humble in Adoring, and fervent in Petitioning: For what can we expect of Good, if, when we come to pray, we forget both ourselves, and thee, our God?

Preserve us likewise, we beseech thee, from all roving and unsettled Thoughts, in Time of Prayer, and fix them wholly upon thee; for we cannot but own it a very unaccountable Weakness, to be so many ways in Want of thy Help, and yet, when we come before thee, then not to think what we want, nor what we ask.

This plainly shews our Prayer to be a Kind of Form, which we are not willing to omit; but that, in Reality, we are not serious in our Fear of Hell, or Desires of Heaven; whilst whenever we come seemingly to treat of these great Affairs, we adjourn the Consideration, and let every little Business, and impertinent Phancy, take Place of this greater Concern.

O God! What can we do, but condemn ourselves of an intolerable Carelessness, and wonderful Stupidity, in opening our Hearts to every idle Thought, when we are speaking to thee our God, and settling the Affairs of Eternity! 'Tis enough to humble us, to see this Weakness, and I pray God it may truly humble us; that

seeing ourselves, we may labour to be more serious.

And thou, O God, help us in performing better this Duty of Prayer, that whenever we undertake it, we may be more watchful against the many Distractions, to which we are subject: So as not only to resolve against them, but likewise to be afraid of them, as of the Designs of an Enemy, and with all our Power to cast them from us. Grant this, O God, because we have Reason to apprehend, that our general Dissipation of Mind, in Time of Prayer, is nothing but our want of Care, a Want of being truly in earnest in what we do.

But whatever our Care be, let it be thy Mercy to us, that we never presume of what we do, nor depend on our own Endeavours, but entirely on thy Promises and the Merits of Jesus Christ our Redeemer: For we confess, of ourselves, Sinners as we are, and Children of *Adam*, we have no Right even to pray, much less can we have Hopes of obtaining. All our Sufficiency is in Jesus Christ, and therefore grant, we beseech thee, we may never presume of ourselves, but always ask in his Name; for 'tis, upon this Condition only, we have the Promise of being heard.

Let

On the Three Rogation-Days. 275

Let us pray.

O God, from whom all good Things proceed, grant to us thy Petitioners, that by thy Holy Inspirations, we may think what is right, and by thy Direction, do what is good. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

On the Three Rogation-Days.

Luke xi. 5, 13.

These being Rogation-Days, on which the Faithful are call'd to humble themselves in Abstinence and Prayer; so to obtain God's Blessing on the Fruits of the Earth, and for our Preservation from all pestilential Distempers, as likewise to prepare for the great Solemnity of Christ's Ascension: Let us therefore join with the Church, and offer both our Abstinence and Prayer, in soliciting, as the Church directs.

Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, have Regard to the Humiliation and Prayers
of

276 *On the Three Rogation-Days.*

of thy Church, which in one Voice and Mind, is united throughout the World, in Petitioning for thy Mercy. Turn not away thy Ears from their Cries, but, as thou hast encourag'd them to seek thee, so mercifully grant them the Effect of their Desires. And while we likewise now join, and add our Mite to the rest, be favourable to us, and grant our Requests.

Look, O Lord, we beseech thee, upon us thy Creatures, and as thou hast given us a Being, so in thy Mercy vouchsafe to support the Being, which is thy Gift. Let nothing be wanting to us, which is necessary for our Subsistence: And for this End, let the Fruits of the Earth partake of thy Blessing; for we confess, O God, that all the Industry of Man upon the Earth, cannot make it fruitful, except thou, who art the heavenly Husbandman, dost give the Increase. Wherefore, O Lord, let thy heavenly Dew water the Earth, and by a seasonable Time make it bring forth its Fruit; that enjoying the Plenty of thy Blessings, the Poor may be provided, and the Rich be excited, with Gratitude, to acknowledge their common Benefactor.

This Mercy, O God, we ask, depending on thy infinite Goodness; for when we consider ourselves, and see, how thy Blessings, in the Fruits of the Earth, are so many Ways abus'd to Sin, and made serviceable

On the Three Rogation-Days. 277

viceable to all manner of Excess; we cannot but be in Confusion at the Sight of our sinful Ingratitude, and know not how to ask thy Blessings, to be again repeated upon us, which we have hitherto so much perverted to thy Displeasure.

We confess it therefore, O Lord, we are ungrateful Wretches, and altogether unworthy of what we ask. But, O merciful Father, look not, we beseech thee, upon our Iniquities, nor deal with us according to our Sins; but according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies, have Compassion on us. 'Tis to thy own infinite Goodness we appeal, which has so many Ways manifested itself to the unworthy, and by undeserv'd Mercies, oblig'd even the greatest Sinners to confess and glorify thy holy Name. This Goodness, O Lord, manifest to us also, in the Grant of our Petition, that we may give Glory to thee, and with Thanksgiving acknowledge, how much thy Mercy exceeds our Iniquity.

And not only thus, but, O Lord, let Dust and Ashes yet farther enlarge its Petition to its God, for the Preservation of this Being, which thou hast given us; for 'tis not only on the Product of the Earth we depend, but likewise on the Air too, which, in the Breath we draw, is a Part of our Life. Grant us therefore, we beseech

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beseech thee, a seasonable Time, and let no Infection corrupt the Air, by which we live; preserve us from all pestilential Distempers both in Man and Beast; turn not thy Creatures against us for our Destruction, and suffer not those, by which we live, to take Life from us.

This, O God, must be the Effect of thy Goodness to us; for we confess, our Life is wholly in thy Hands, and if thou preserv'st us not, we cannot subsist. Have Compassion therefore on us, who here acknowledge our Dependance, and grant we may be ever mindful of it, and this, O God, in such a manner, as to live to thy Glory, and every Day return our Being to thee, which we have receiv'd from thee, and which, every Day, depends on thy Goodness for its Support.

In order to this, grant us, we beseech thee, a true Sense of Gratitude, which may oblige us, at all Times, to be faithful in thy Service, and give us a Horror of offending thee, by whose pure Mercy we subsist.

Let this Gratitude likewise extend, O Lord, to the Use of all thy Creatures; that, whereas thy Goodness has provided them, for the Support of our Necessities, and the Preservation of our Being, we may, with Thanksgiving, use them for this End, so to answer the Purposes of thy
Bounty

On the Three Rogation-Days. 279

Bounty to us. But then, O Lord, may we be ever mindful, how great must be the Crime, of turning thy Gifts to the Service of Sin, which thou hast given us for our Subsistence; and may the Horror of this Ingratitude, for the future, be a Check to our Inclinations; and a Tie upon our Hands, as often as by our Corruption, we are prompted to such Unworthiness against thee, our God, and merciful Benefactor.

Grant this, O Lord, and let this be the Effect of thy Grace to us, that now, while we ask for Blessings, we may learn to make a right Use of what we receive, and no more abuse thy Bounty to the Encrease of our Sin.

Grant likewise, we may truly humble ourselves, this Day, and by a sincere Repentance, purify our Souls from the Guilt of all our past Iniquity, and thus prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of our Lord's Ascension, by accompanying him at present in Spirit and Desire to the Throne of his eternal Father, and being in a Preparation to follow him, whenever our Time shall come to be call'd out of this World.

The same is to be repeated on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who in our Affliction, confide in thy Goodness, may, under thy Protection, be defended from all Adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ascension-Day.

Mark xvi. 14, 20.

THis being the Festival of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven; let us this Day give him Thanks for all, he has suffer'd, in the Work of our Redemption; and rejoice with him, that the Time of his Humiliation being ended, he is now to enter into the Kingdom of his Father.

Let us pray.

THis being the Day, on which all thy Labours, O Blessed Jesus, were finish'd on Earth, behold we here assembled, mov'd with a Sense of Gratitude, bow down, and give thee Thanks, for all
 and thou

thou hast suffer'd for the Redemption of Man.

For the Humility and Poverty of thy Birth. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For the Humility of thy Education, in living so many Years in Subjection to thy Parents. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For thy Fasting Forty-Days in the Desert for our Example. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For thy going through Towns and Cities, Preaching the Kingdom of God, Healing and doing Good to all. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For thy Seeking the lost Sheep, and the great Encouragement thou hast given to Sinners, to return to God, with the Hopes of finding Mercy. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For giving us thy Body and Blood, for the Food and Nourishment of our Souls. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For thy Agony in the Garden, and being Betray'd by thy own Disciple. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For being Seiz'd and Carried away as a Malefactor; for being falsely Accus'd, and Struck on the Face. R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For

For being denied by thy own Apostle ;
Despis'd by *Herod*, and Given up by *Pilate*
to the Will of the Jews. R. *We adore,*
praise, and give thee Thanks.

For being Scourg'd at the Pillar, and
Condemn'd to a most disgraceful Death.
R. *We adore, praise, and give thee Thanks.*

For being Reckon'd with Malefactors,
Crucified between Two Thieves, made
the Scorn of Men ; Blasphem'd by those
that pass'd by ; Derided by the Jews ;
Mock'd by the Soldiers, and Revil'd by the
Malefactors. R. *We adore, praise, and*
give thee Thanks.

For all the Humiliations, Reproaches,
false Accusations, Persecutions, and Cru-
elties, thou wast pleas'd to suffer for our
Salvation, from thy Birth in the Stable,
to thy Sacred Death on the Cross. R.
For all, O Lord, whatever thou hast done
and suffer'd for us, we, on this Day of thy
Exaltation, adore, praise, and give thee
Thanks.

For all, O Lord Jesus, may thy Holy
Name be bless'd, ador'd, and sanctified
by all Creatures ; may all Nations of the
Earth confess the Glory of thy Mercy ;
and may all, that believe in thee, daily
renew the Memory of thy overflowing
Charity, in the grateful Acknowledg-
ments of a holy Life, by serving thee
faith-

faithfully, and being ever zealous for thy Honour.

And now, O Blessed Redeemer, this being a Day of thy Triumphal Entrance into Heaven, behold, we join with thee in our Joys ; for that the Time of thy Suffering is ended ; for that thou hast finish'd the difficult Work thou hadst undertaken ; hast overcome Sin, overcome Death, overcome Hell ; and art now entering victorious into Heaven, to be glorified for thy Humiliation, to take Possession of thy eternal Kingdom, to be seated at the Right Hand of thy Father ; there to be ador'd by the Angels, to be prais'd by the Cherubins, to be magnified by the Seraphims, to be glorified by all blessed Spirits, and the Souls of the Just, for all Eternity.

For this, O Blessed Jesus, we rejoice ; ascend therefore, O Triumphant Redeemer, and possess that Kingdom, which thou hast purchas'd for thyself and us, at the Price of thy Sacred Blood.

Princes, lift up your Gates: Eternal Gates, be ye lifted up, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Christ is the King of Glory : Our Lord strong and mighty ; our Lord, powerful in Battel.

Princes,

Princes, lift up your Gates: Eternal Gates, be ye lifted up, and the King of Glory shall enter.

Christ is the King of Glory: The Lord of all Power, he is the King of Glory.

All you Nations, rejoice; with Jubilee and loud Exclamations, give Praise to God.

For Christ ascends in Triumph, and our Lord with the Sound of Trumpets.

Sing Praises to our God; sing, sing Praises to our King.

For God is King of the whole Earth, sing with Understanding.

God will reign over the Nations; God sits upon his Holy Throne.

Our Lord has prepar'd his Throne in Heaven; and all Things shall be subject to his Empire.

Bless our Lord, all his Angels, mighty in Strength, who execute his Commands, and are still ready to receive his Orders.

Bless our Lord, all you Militia of Heaven, who are Ministers to execute his Will.

Bless our Lord, all his Works, in every Place of his Dominions; my Soul, bless thou our Lord.

Receive, O Lord, these our Jubilees in this Day of thy Ascension, and now mercifully vouchsafe to make us so sensible of thy Glory, that, from this time, our Hearts may be inflam'd with a Desire of following
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ing thee, and our principal Care be, to walk in those Steps, which have led thee to this State of Bliss.

But then, O most loving Redeemer, on this Festival of thy Ascension, vouchsafe to remember us, who are here left in this Vale of Tears, who are here encompass'd with Dangers, have many Difficulties, wherewith to struggle, and are so disabled thro' our own Corruption, that, if we have not the Blessing of thy Protection and Grace, for our Assistance, we shall certainly fail in our Hopes, and never be so happy, as to follow thee.

Have Compassion therefore on us, and now ascending to the Father, leave us thy Blessing. This Favour thou didst shew to thy Apostles, in lifting up thy Hands, and blessing them before thy Ascension. Remember us also, on this Day, and vouchsafe to give us thy Blessing; the Blessing, O Lord, of true Peace; the Blessing of a firm Faith; the Blessing of Patience; the Blessing of a sincere and humble Heart; the Blessing of Purity and Charity; the Blessing of the Love of God with all our Heart, and with all our Strength. This Blessing grant us, O Lord, on this Day of thy Joy; that, as thou ascendest to Heaven, so we may be in Preparation to follow thee.

But

But then, O most gracious Lord, for the more effectual accomplishing this great Work, vouchsafe to change our Hearts by thy holy Grace, and raise them above all that, which, at this time, links them to the Earth.

Raise our Hearts, O Lord, we beseech thee, above all that is sinful; break our Chains, which at present keep our Souls, as Captives to the World, and hinder us from walking in the Ways of thy Commandments: For if we obtain not this Grace of thee, how shall we follow thee?

We know, we cannot enter into Heaven with our Sins, and therefore, that we must either renounce our Sins, or lose our Hope. Help us therefore, O Blessed Lord, and by thy Grace, give us Strength to overcome all our Evils; that we may no longer live on in the Practice of what is sinful, but break from it with Violence, and chuse rather to bear the Difficulty of present Self-denials, in order to our Amendment, than abide in such a State, which can have no Admittance into Happiness.

Raise likewise our Hearts, O God, above the Love of Money, and of the World; that no immoderate Affection to perishable Goods, may indispose our Hearts, and render them unfit for seeking thee our God.

Raise

Raise our Hearts, O God, above all that is serviceable to an ambitious or vain Humour; for we are very sensible, how much this disorders the Soul, confines it to Earth, and takes it off from seeking that Happiness, which thou hast prepar'd for us.

Raise our Hearts, O God, above all immoderate Sollicitude for the Things of this World, and take from us all Excess: Because this is a continual Distraction to the Soul, and makes us so busy with Trifles, that we have no leisure for seeking what is Eternal.

Raise our Hearts, O God, above all Disquiets, Trouble, Contention, vain Fears, Amusements, and inward Oppression of any Grief: For these are very prejudicial to us, and whenever our Souls sink under any of them, we are in Danger of being put out of the Way of Heaven, and are so much in the Dark as not to see, by which Way we are to advance to thee.

Raise our Hearts, O God, above all other Things, whatever they be, which engage us to the Earth, and are a Hindrance in the Way of Salvation. Thou know'st all our Difficulties, and what it is in particular, that is a Snare to our Soul. To thee, O God, we submit it, whatever it be, and most earnestly beseech thee, to be our Deliverer.

Raise

Heal,

Heal, O Blessed Redeemer, our distemper'd Minds ; diminish in them all worldly Concerns. Convince us, this Day, that our only Happiness is in Heaven, and inspire us now with sincere Desires of seeking that Happiness. Draw our Hearts to thee, O Jesus, and while thou ascendest to Heaven, leave us not under our natural Blindness, to seek Happiness on Earth ; for where can be our Happiness, if we love not thee ?

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who believe thy only Son, this Day to have ascended into Heaven, may dwell there in Spirit, by fixing our Minds on heavenly Things. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

For all the Days within the Octave of the Ascension.

O Blessed Redeemer, who being ascended into Heaven, art seated at the Right-Hand of thy Father ; look upon us with the Eyes of Mercy, who are yet in this
Vale

Octave of the Ascension. 289

Vale of Tears, who are yet separated from thee, our everlasting Good, and (which is a still greater Unhappiness) are in Danger of being eternally separated from thee.

We have nothing in our Nature, that can prevent this being our unhappy Lot ; nay, of ourselves, we draw this Misfortune upon our own Heads ; for what are we, O God, but Blindness and Corruption ? What are we, but poor Worms ; who are pleas'd with Evil ; who run into Sin ; who forsake thee, our God ; who hearken to every Thing that is vain and deceitful, and are tired with those Things only, which will do us good ? Every Day we see so much of our own Perverseness and Weakness, that we are oblig'd to humble ourselves before thee, and confess, that, if we are left to ourselves, we must certainly perish, and everlasting Misery must be our Inheritance.

To thee therefore, O Blessed Jesus, we lift up our Eyes and Heart, imploring thy Mercy in behalf of us miserable Sinners, confessing, that thou art our only Help, and our Hope, and that if thy Compassion does not move thee to our Assistance, we have nothing wherein to trust.

Look therefore, we beseech thee, upon us, and considering all our Misery and Weakness, mercifully give us Help, as thou seest our Wants require it. And now

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at this Time, since thou art ascended to the Father, there to prepare a Place for us, and hast commanded us to follow thee; prepare, we beseech thee, our Hearts, to obey thy Commands, and suffer nothing to put us out of the Way, into which thou hast call'd us.

That we may be thus happy, give us, O most Gracious Lord, a true Apprehension of this World, and of all that belongs to it. Open our Hearts, to see, how vain, false, and deceitful it is; how treacherous are all the Satisfactions it offers, how contemptible is all its Greatness, and how short its Continuance.

Hence, O God, grant this Mercy to us, that we may learn to despise the World; that we may neither desire its Favour, nor fear its Frowns, but have an equal Contempt of both Extremes; convince us likewise of the true Value of the eternal Goods, which thou hast prepar'd for those, that serve thee, and how great is the Happiness of being in the unchangeable Possession of thee, our God.

Hence, O Jesus, may we see still more plainly, what the World is; how great is the Folly of admiring it; how great is the Blindness of seeking it, more than the next; and how unaccountable is the Madness of losing everlasting Happiness, and all

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Octave of the Ascension. 291

that is Good, for the momentary Satisfaction of this present Life.

In this manner, O Blessed Redeemer, settle the inward Sentiments of our Souls, that we may truly conceive how great is thy Love, in Commanding us to follow thee, and that our only true Interest, is in Obeying thy Commands: That we may no more be deluded with Things, that are present, but thirst after eternal Goods: That we may not measure either our Happiness or Unhappiness, by our present Circumstances of Life; but only with regard to Eternity: That we may look upon it as the Portion of worldly Souls, to seek the World, and have their Hearts taken up with its Concerns: And, as for us, that being call'd to an everlasting Inheritance, our Business is to seek God, and labour for Happiness that is eternal.

Thus, O Jesus, let thy Grace work in us, and fix these Principles in our Souls, that our Lives may be directed by them. For, we confess, we are yet very imperfect, and far from that Disposition of Heart, which we desire. As yet our Concern is too great for worldly Things; we are too desirous of what pleases, and too much disquieted at every Thing that is uneasy to us. We know not yet, how to take up our Cross with Satisfaction, nor are pleas'd with such Humiliations, as are

capable of advancing us in our Way to Heaven.

These and many other Imperfections are yet in us, which too plainly shew, that this World is more to us, than it ought; and that our Souls are not in a due Preparation of following thee to the Region of Bliss.

But whatever our Indispositions be, behold, O most loving Redeemer, we are our own Accusers; we lay them all before thee, and implore both thy Power and Mercy, for the Remedy of our Complaints.

Have Compassion therefore on us, we beseech thee; reform all our Disorders, remedy our Weaknesses, change our Hearts, and mercifully renew in us the inward Man: That now we may begin to live in earnest like Men of Faith, like Persons, who shew their Comfort to depend on thee, and their Happiness to be, not in this World, but in the Life to come.

Hear us, O God, our Saviour, and now powerfully draw our Hearts to thee: Draw us by the Love of eternal Bliss; draw us by the Desire of enjoying thee our God; and let the Strength of thy Grace be such, as to carry us on, so as not to be put out of our Way, either by the Flatteries of this World, or the Troubles of it.

Teach

Octave of the Ascension. 293

Teach us to make a right Use of all the Circumstances of our Life, so as, whether we are pleas'd, or displeas'd, still to ask this Question, *How am I to manage the present Circumstances, so as to make it serviceable to eternal Life?* May this be our Consideration at all Times; and in this may we be as wise as the Children of this Generation: As they are ever contriving, how to make the best of every Thing, in order to their present Interest; so may it be our Contrivance, how to turn every Thing to the Advantage of the Life to come.

May this be our Wisdom, to seek the next World, whilst others seek this; turn our Hearts, O God, that way; turn our Desires, turn our Endeavours, and in that may we place our principal Comfort. Work this happy Effect in our Souls, O God, and in this manner prepare them for a better Rest, than this World affords: Thus, O Jesus, we may hope, when thou call'st us out of this Life, to ascend to thee, and take Possession of those Places, which thou hast undertaken to prepare for us.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who believe thy only Son, this Day, to have ascended into Heaven; may

may dwell there in Spirit, by fixing our Minds on heavenly Things. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Sunday *within the* Octave of the
Ascension.

John xv. 26, 16, 4.

IN this Day's Gospel, Christ tells his Apostles, of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which he would send to them; that this Spirit should bear Testimony of him, and that they likewise should bear Testimony of him. Hence let us take Occasion to pray, that whereas we have been taught by the Apostles, and are their Followers, we likewise may bear Testimony of Christ, and of our Faith in him.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and everlasting God, who hast glorified thy only Son, and to fulfill his Promise, didst send down the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, upon the Apostles; so to prepare them for that great Work, to which they were call'd: Mercifully

cifully grant, that we also may partake of the same Holy Spirit, and being Disciples to the same Master, may be enabled to satisfy those Obligations, which, in our Sphere, belong to us.

In particular, O God, since it has been thy Mercy to us, to bring us to the Faith of thy only Son, we beseech thee, that, as in thy Apostles, so likewise in us, this Faith may be perfected by thy holy Spirit; that by the Effect of this holy Mover, we may bear Testimony of Christ, and in the general Practice of our Lives, give Proof of our Faith in him.

Help us in this Point, O God, because we know our Weakness, and observe many Occasions, in which we are call'd to give Testimony of Christ; but are so unhappy, as not to think of our Duty, and even to forget, whose Disciples we are.

How often, O Jesus, do we forget thee, in time of our Trouble, and when any Provocation is given us by our Neighbour? 'Tis in such Occasions, we are bound to suffer with Humility, Patience, and Peace; and by these Marks to give Evidence of thy Doctrine, of our Faith in thee, and in thy Promises, which thou hast made to such, as by thy Example, take up their Cross, and follow thee.

Thus we are oblig'd by our Profession, and 'tis certain, those Christians, who thus

bear their Cross, in the Spirit of a peaceable and humble Patience, do plainly give Testimony of Christ. They shew the Strength of his Grace, they shew the Power of the Gospel, they preach and edify by their Example, they encourage others to submit to the Discipline of the Cross, they testify the Truth of his Promises, whilst they renounce Nature, and suffer that, which is most disagreeable to them, in hopes of gaining that Crown, which is set before them.

Thus do the patient Christians: But what do we? Can we say, that, in our suffering, we bear Testimony of Christ? We presently become impatient; Passion disturbs us; Gall is in our Hearts, Bitterness on our Lips, our whole inward and outward Man is in Disorder. And what is there in all this, of Christ or his Gospel?

O Blessed Jesus! With Shame we confess it; in our Trouble, we give no Testimony of thee. We shew, that a corrupt Nature still governs in us; we give Proof of our Pride, and our Passion abounding in us; we shew, how little we desire to have to do with thy Cross, and how very little we confide in thy Promises, who are willing to suffer nothing, in hopes of thy Eternal Recompence.

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Octave of the Ascension. 297

O merciful Redeemer ! What a Confusion ought this to be to us, that after so many Years professing ourselves thy Disciples, we yet give so very little Proof either of believing in thee, or knowing thy Gospel ! O God, we own it a great Fault, and implore thy infinite Mercy, both for the Pardon of this our Neglect, and likewise for preparing our Souls to do better for the time to come.

Grant us therefore, O God, thy Grace, that as often as any thing of Trouble or Uneasiness happens to us, we may then be mindful, that we are call'd upon to give Testimony of thee ; and do thou, O Jesus, then stand by us, and give us Strength to perform, what is demanded of us.

Then, O God, enable us, we beseech thee, to compose our Thoughts, to suppress all inward Disturbance ; then open our Eyes, to see thee going under the Weight of thy Cross, and bearing it before us ; then may we lift up our Hearts, and see that Eternal Weight of Glory, which thou hast provided for those, who persevere to the End. Then may we remember thy Word ; *He that does not take his Cross, and follow after me, is not worthy of me.*

Thus prepar'd, O Jesus, may we be ever ready to take up our Cross, and bear

it with Patience, bear it with an humble Spirit, bear it with Submission, bear it with Hope; and thus labouring to conform ourselves to thy Spirit and Gospel, may we give Testimony of thee, under all Troubles, and according to our Profession, shew ourselves to be thy Disciples, even the Disciples of Christ crucified, who have an entire Faith in thee, and the Life to come.

And not only in time of Trouble, but on all other Occasions, may we bear Witness of thee, our Redeemer, of thy Doctrine, and thy Promises.

Hence, O Jesus, since thou hast commanded us to seek first the Kingdom of God, and not to love this World, may we every Day give Testimony of thee, and what thou hast taught.

Give us Grace, to be constant in all those Exercises, which thou hast declar'd most effectual for gaining Heaven. May we be zealous and edifying in our Prayers; liberal in giving Alms; forward in Comforting and Assisting; charitable in Advising; exemplary in Conversation; moderate in all that belongs to this World; giving no Offence to any; abounding in every good Work, and letting no corrupt Communication come out of our Mouths.

Thus, O God, may we be faithful to thee, walking in all thy Commandments, and labouring in all Things to put on our Lord
Jesus

Octave of the Ascension. 299

Jesus Christ, and to live by his Spirit :
And in this manner be daily sollicitous to
shew ourselves the true Disciples of our
Master, and in our Lives bear Testimony
of him.

In consequence to this Method, give
us again thy Grace, to depart from the
World, as far as the World departs from
the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and sets up for
other Principles, which are not approv'd
by him.

Whence, O God, we implore thy Di-
vine Help, for rooting out of our Hearts
the Love of the World, so that we may
neither admire its Greatness, nor desire its
Happiness, nor seek its Pumps, nor be
fond of any Thing in it ; but rather
chuse, with Christ, all that is abject and
humble.

Thus, O most Gracious Lord, may we
separate from all, that is vain, pompous,
and immoderate in the World, and labour
to bring all Things, in which we are con-
cern'd, to the Humility and Moderation of
the Gospel. And if Nature or Acquain-
tance pleads against the Method, may we
call to mind our Profession, and, with that,
answer all Arguments.

May we remember, that our Profession
is Christian, and what is that, but to be
Followers of Christ ? And having under-
taken this, can it be any Wonder, if we
have

have more Regard to what Christ teaches, than to what the World prescribes? Or can it be reprov'able, if we let Christ be our Guide, and not the World? There can certainly be no deserv'd Reproof, and therefore, we beseech thee, O God, confirm us in this Principle, of being ever solicitous, to bear Testimony of Christ in our Lives, and not of the World; since our Profession is, to forsake all for Christ, and not to forsake Christ or his Gospel, for the World.

If this cannot fail of meeting Railery to discourage it; yet still, O God, establish us in our Principle; and let us not be so weak, as to fear that, which is not to be fear'd. We have reason to fear thee, O God, because by thee we are to be judg'd, and thou hast Power of casting into Hell. But what reason has a Christian to fear the World, especially as to the Judgment it makes; since being at Enmity with Christ, its Censures are a good Argument of being in the right?

Wherefore, we beseech thee, O most loving Father, let this thy Mercy be confirm'd to us, that, without regarding what the World says, we may only consider this one thing, What thou say'st to us, who hast the Words of eternal Life, and by following this Rule, give Testimony of thee.



Thus,

Octave of the Ascension. 301

Thus, O God, in our Cloaths, at our Table, in our Furniture, may we observe great *Moderation*; because thou hast prescribed it in thy Sacred Word. And tho' the World encourages what is prodigal and vain in all these; yet still keep us faithful to thy Law, and, by our Moderation, may we ever bear Witness of thee.

Let the same be the Rule of all our Conversation; and therefore since thou hast given us Directions, to humble ourselves to all; not to do any Thing to be seen of Men; not to love the uppermost Seats; not to do any thing through Strife or vain Glory; not to be high-minded; not to exalt ourselves, but to walk worthy of our Vocation, with all Humility and Meekness and Long-suffering; let it be thy Mercy to us, to be faithful to thy Law, and tho' the World encourages all that is contrary to it, yet still by our Humility, may we ever bear Witness of thee.

Grant, O God, the same may be our Rule in all Company, so as ever to keep our Eye upon thy Holy Will, upon thy Commandments and Gospel; and whatever we shall be invited to join in, contrary to what thou hast taught us; whether in sinful Discourse, in any Intemperance or other Excess, may we still decline it, and thus by keeping within the Bounds

Thus,

Bounds of thy Gospel, be ever zealous to bear Witness of thee.

This is what we desire to do, in all other Particulars, where-ever the World sets up for other Maxims, than what thou hast taught. In all these, give us Grace to remember, who is our Master, who is our God, who is to be our Judge, and what is the Rule, we have undertaken, and profess to follow.

Grant we may remember it, and not only remember it, but likewise, O merciful God, give us Strength to follow it; for great is our Weakness in this Point; and if thou help'st us not, we are, every Day of our Lives, in danger of being misled by the World. We have too great an Opinion of it, tho' thou hast declar'd it thy Enemy; and whilst it promotes what is suitable to our Inclination, we are willing to find Reasons to follow it, though, at the same time, we are sensible of it not being according to what thou hast taught.

Wherefore, O most loving Redeemer, we beseech thee, to shew thy Mercy to us in this our Weakness, and give us Grace to stand against it; give us Grace to be sincere in what we have undertaken; and since our Profession is, not of following the World, but of following thee our Redeemer, grant, we may be solicitous
to

to follow thy Gospel, and in the whole Method of our Life, endeavour to bear Testimony of thee; for this only can afford true Comfort to those, that believe in thee.

Let us pray.

ALmighty and everlasting God, mercifully work this Effect in our Souls, that our Wills may be piously affected towards thee, and that we may serve thee with sincere Hearts. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Whitsun-Eve.

John xiv. 15, 21.

THis being the Eve of the great Solemnity of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was sent down upon the Apostles; let us beg Grace to prepare our Souls, for receiving this Holy Spirit: It being for this End, this Day is appointed.

Let

Let us pray.

O God, who, in Mercy to us, hast, by thy Church, appointed us Times, for reviving in our Hearts the Memory of thy Blessings, and for preparing our Souls, that so we may have Part in thy Mercy: Grant, we beseech thee, we may this Day comply with the Designs of thy Goodness, and labour to put ourselves into that good Disposition, as not to be excluded, for our Unworthiness, from the Mercy of this Time.

Grant we may follow the Pattern set us by the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles, and from their Example learn to prepare.

They were order'd to go to *Jerusalem*, and wait for the Coming of the Holy Ghost; and for this End, they retir'd into an upper Room, and there, withdrawn from the World, prepar'd for the heavenly Visit.

O God, help us in following this Method, and now give us Grace, this Day, to take off our Hearts from all the Disturbance of worldly Concerns. May we admit of no unnecessary Business, nor let any unprofitable Visit or Conversation be a Distraction to our Minds. And however uneasy this may be; yet, O God, let this
be

be no Hindrance ; but may we still remember, that our Business, as Christians, is not to seek our Ease, but to seek thee : That the Concern is not great, whether Nature be pleas'd ; but 'tis our greatest Concern, that our Souls be prepar'd to receive the Holy Ghost.

Thus, O most merciful God, help us in disengaging our Hearts from all, that can be a Distraction to them ; help us in gaining an inward Peace ; and let it be our present Grief, that while we spend so much of our Lives in preparing for the World, we find so little Inclination, to employ a few Moments in preparing for thee, our God.

Besides this, O God, may we, this Day, examine our Hearts, and see, if there be any Thing there injurious to that Charity and brotherly Love, which is due to every Neighbour. For while thy Apostles were together in the same Room, with one Accord, expecting the Coming of the Holy Spirit, they plainly shew us, of what Spirit we ought to be, and that no Uncharitableness is to be in those Breasts, which are to be the Habitation of the Holy Ghost.

Grant therefore, O God of Peace, we may, this Day, remove out of our Hearts, whatever lies hid there of Malice, Hatred, Ill-Will or Dissention : And not yield to a
per-

perverse Nature, in a Point, which renders us incapable of all thy Blessings. Give us Strength to comply with this great Duty; and this, O God, not only with our Lips, but sincerely from our Hearts, forgiving all, whomsoever we apprehend to have been injurious to us. Help us here, we beseech thee, for we know, how easy we are, in deceiving ourselves: And yet, if we do deceive ourselves, how can we hope for the God of Charity and Peace, to take Possession of our Breasts?

Still another Favour we ask of thee, our most Gracious Lord; that, as the Blessed Virgin, with thy Apostles, were at this time persevering in Prayer, to prepare for the descending of the Holy Ghost: So we may employ some time, in the same Holy Exercise, and by sending up fervent Sighs to Heaven, move thee to pour forth thy Spirit upon us.

Wherefore, O God, teach us how to pray; teach us, at this time, to manifest our Desires before thee, and from the true Sense of our Wants, to importune thy Mercy to our Relief.

O God, we are certainly poor and miserable, and 'tis by the Infusion of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, we are to be replenish'd with new Life. Grant, therefore, we may have a true Sollicitude, at
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this time, for obtaining it, and let nothing be wanting, through our Neglect, that may be necessary to prepare our Souls for so divine a Guest.

For this End, we beseech thee, O Holy Spirit, to enlighten and direct us in these Days of thy Solemnity; let not the Spirit of the World govern in us, but do thou, O Holy Ghost, so entirely move us, that by thy own Direction our Souls may be prepar'd, not only to receive thee now, but to become thy Habitation for ever.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the Splendour of thy Brightness may shine upon us; and that the Light of thy Light may, by the Illumination of the Holy Ghost, confirm those, who thro' thy Grace are regenerated. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Whit-

Whit-Sunday.

John xiv. 23, 31.

THis being the Day, on which the Holy Ghost the Comforter, as Christ had promis'd, came down upon the Apostles, in the Form of fiery Tongues, and so replenish'd them with a new Spirit, that they were now fitted for that great Work, which Christ had recommended to them, of preaching his Faith to all Nations: Let us, with Gratitude, acknowledge this Mercy, and give Praise to God for the Blessing of this Day.

Let us pray.

O God, of infinite Goodness, behold we thy Servants bow down, acknowledge and give Thanks for the wonderful Mercy of this Day, in sending down thy Holy Spirit upon the Apostles.

To be their Guide, to teach, and lead them into all Truth.

To be their Light, to go before them, and give them Understanding.

To

To be their Comforter, to abide with them for ever.

To be their Life and Strength, to confirm them against their own natural Weakness.

To be their Peace, amidst all the Contradictions of an unbelieving World.

To prepare and fit them, for preaching the Faith of Christ to all Nations.

For confessing his Name before Princes and Potentates.

For making War against the Prince of Darkness.

For overthrowing the Empire of the Devil.

For establishing the Church of Christ, an eternal Kingdom, which should never have an End.

For following their Master, and triumphing over Vice and Error, by their Blood.

For this thy Mercy, O God, may all Nations bless thee.

May all People of the Earth adore thee.

May all the Gentiles give Praise to thy Name.

For that by the Mercy of this Day, thou hast establish'd a Church.

To which thou hast made thy Covenant of Mercy.

For being the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

To

For

For leading all in the Way of Salvation.

For thy being its everlasting Light.

For having its Gates open continually, and not to be shut, Day or Night.

This, O most Gracious Lord, was an Effect of thy Goodness; grant, we beseech thee, we may be truly sensible of it; and that living thy faithful Servants, we may have the Benefit of thy Holy Ordinance, and thou be glorified in thy own Works.

May we be ever mindful, how great is the Mercy of sending the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, and in them their Successors, to watch over the Church, and be its perpetual Guides, to lead it into all Truth.

For this, O most loving Father, infinite Thanks are due; for that by this Holy Ordinance, divided Nations are united into one Body, disagreeing Judgments joined with one Mind, in the same Profession; and we, tho' blind and weak, and subject to endless Mistakes in common Matters, are here secur'd in the Truth of the highest Mysteries.

For this thy most tender Care of us, O indulgent Father, we are not able to render thee just Thanks. But, O God, as far as we are capable, we here confess thy Goodness, and express our most hearty Desires, that as this thy Holy Institution,

is our unspeakable Comfort and Support, amidst the distracted Notions of an incredulous World; so it may daily bring forth Children to thee, who may walk here by the Gospel and Spirit of our Lord Jesus, and being translated from this his mystical Body here on Earth, may be added to those Choirs above, there to give thee the eternal Praises for all thy Mercies.

But, O merciful Father, hear now our Petitions in behalf of ourselves, and they are such, as thy Goodness encourages us to make.

Thou didst pour forth thy Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, and every Way fit them for their great and difficult Charge: by this Spirit thou didst sanctify them, and enflame their Hearts with divine Love; by the same Spirit thou didst give them Light, and Understanding, and Patience, and Courage, and Perseverance, and not only give them Joy in their Sufferings, but likewise Desires of offering their Lives a sacrifice to thy Glory.

In the same bountiful Manner thou hast provided thy Church with the same Holy Spirit, for transmitting thy divine Truths to all Generations, and for being Guide to the Faithful, in the Ways of eternal Peace.

But

But still, O God, amidst these wonderful Effects of thy Goodness, behold how poor and miserable we are; behold, how much we are in want of that divine Guest descending upon us, and taking Possession of our Breasts.

Consider, we beseech thee, our unhappy Circumstances; see, how little we have of the Love of thee our God; how cold and senseless we are in our Prayers; how little we have of Courage, who are so easily, and so very often dejected; how little we have of Patience, who are so easily disturb'd, and lose all our inward Peace, upon every Thing that thwarts us; how fearful we are of suffering, who esteeming all Suffering to be our Unhappiness, are ever ready to ward it from us, tho' by such Means, as are displeasing to thee.

This, O God, is but a Part of our Unhappiness; but as it is, it plainly convinces us, how very much we are in want of thy Holy Spirit; and we hope, it will be enough, to move thee to have Compassion on us, in order to our Relief.

Wherefore, O merciful and most loving Father, we earnestly implore thy Goodness to look upon us with Pity; and whereas we are subject to such a manifold Weakness, vouchsafe to consider our infirm Condition, and, this Day, may

we find the Remedy, from thy bountiful Hand.

Vouchsafe, that, with the Apostles, we may partake in the Mercy of this Day. Pour forth thy Holy Spirit into our Hearts; let the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, descend upon us; and may he find our Souls so prepar'd to receive him, as to become his Holy Temple, and the Place of his Abode.

Send forth thy Holy Ghost, O God, as thou hast promis'd, and dwelling in our Hearts, may he so model our whole inward Man, that our own Spirit of Corruption may now no more rule in us, but thy Holy Spirit, O God.

May this Holy Spirit, O Blessed Lord, unite us, and make us one with thee in Charity. May this Divine Guest destroy in us all Fondness of the World, all immoderate Love of Creatures: May it take from our Breast all excessive Sollicitude, and whatever there is upon Earth, that is too apt to possess our Hearts and Thoughts, and fill up that Place, which belongs to thee.

May that Divine Fire, which, this Day, came down from Heaven, kindle in our Hearts the Flame of Divine Love; a flame, which may consume in us all that Corruption, which has hitherto so much prevail'd in our Breasts, and carried us on

in Ways, that are neither becoming our Character, nor consistent with our greatest Interest.

May this Fire of the Holy Ghost inflame our Hearts, with a prudent Zeal for all that belongs to thy Service, so as to find a more true Satisfaction in seeking and serving thee, than in all the passing Comforts, with which this World courts our Inclinations.

May this Holy Fire give Life to us in all our Exercises, by which we make our Addresses to thy Goodness. Suffer us not any more to appear before thee in Prayer, without any Sense or Concern in what we do: Let no Dulness or oppressing Weight sink down our Spirits; nor a senseless Tepidity benumb them, when we present ourselves Petitioners to thee.

No, Blessed Lord, let us no longer go on thus with our distemper'd Souls, undertaking to pray, but performing no other Devotion than of Statues. We are sensible, how very great is this Infirmary, unbecoming thy infinite Majesty, and unsuitable to the Greatness of our Needs and Afflictions. And therefore, O God, we now beg thy Help, and with all the Earnestness of our Souls desire, that the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, would communicate to us new Life, such Life, may appear, as often as we come into thy

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Presence, and carry up our Desires before thy Throne.

Many other Infirmities we labour under, in which we want the Assistance of thy Holy Spirit, for reforming in us the Spirit of the World, and of our own manifold Corruption. Be merciful to us, we beseech thee, on this Day of Mercy, and send us thy Divine Help. Behold, we open our Breasts before thee, to manifest our inward Disorders, and to lay before thee our Desires. Hear us, O God, and, on this Day, reject not our Petitions; for, behold, O Blessed Lord, we have no Help nor Hope but in thee.

And thou, O Holy Ghost, God of all Goodness hear our Prayers, and receive our Sighs: Manifest thy Goodness to us this Day; we confess our Infirmities, and tis from thee our Help must come.

The Hymn.

Come, Holy Spirit, send down from Heaven the Rays of thy Divine Light.

Come thou, who art the Father of the poor, the Author of all good Gifts, and the Light of our Hearts.

Come thou, the best of Comforters, the sweet Guest, and sweetest Refreshment of our Souls.

The Rest of our Labours, the Ruler of our Passions, the Comfort of our Tears.

O Blessed Light, come penetrate the very Centre of the Hearts of thy Faithful.

Without thy Grace, what can Man do? How can he guiltless be.

Wash therefore, Lord, our polluted Souls, water our barren Clay, and heal our Wounds.

Softens our stubborn Wills, inflame our tepid Hearts, and guide our wand'ring Steps.

Grant to the Faithful, who trust in thee, the Treasure of the Sevenfold Gifts.

Grant us a virtuous Life, a happy Death, and a happy Eternity. *Amen. Allelujah.*

Let us pray.

O God, who by the Light of the Holy Ghost, didst, this Day, instruct the Hearts of the Faithful; grant, that through the same Spirit, we may be truly wise, and always rejoice in his Comforts. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity of the same Holy Ghost.

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Whitsun-Monday.

John iii. 16, 21.

THIS Day being kept Holy, in Memory of the Holy Ghost descending upon the Apostles, in the Form of Tongues of Fire: Let us beg, this Day, that the same Holy Spirit wou'd descend likewise upon us, and fit us for the Charge, to which he has call'd us.

Let us pray.

O God of infinite Goodness, who didst shew Mercy to thy Apostles, this Day, in sending to them the Holy Ghost, to prepare them for duly satisfying that great Charge, which Christ had committed to them: Shew Mercy to us likewise thy Servants, and by the Operation of the same Holy Spirit, vouchsafe to prepare us, for satisfying the Obligations, which belong to us, in our several States.

And first, O God, as we are Christians, teach us to understand the Import of this Word; give us a Sense of all the Obligations annex'd to this Profession: We have many Years liv'd under this Character;

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but,

but, O God! how little Care have we taken, to know the Duties belonging to this Name! And how unlike have we liv'd, to what we profess, for want of knowing the Duties of our Profession!

But, O most Gracious Lord, let now thy Holy Spirit open our Understanding, and remove all that Darknes, which has hitherto been Occasion of our Sin. Let us no longer go on under a Holy Name, but ignorant or unconcern'd, as to what thou hast prescrib'd, and we have undertaken.

May we now examine into those Holy Rules, which are recorded in the Gospel, and publish'd for our Instructions: There may we learn the Way, which Christ has taught us, and learn from his Life, how to model ours.

And not only learn; but besides this, give us Grace to practise; and by the Power of thy Holy Spirit, may our Lives be directed according to thy Law. May thy Spirit dwell in our Hearts, and powerfully carry us on, notwithstanding all that is corrupt within us.

Nature and Custom are very strong; but we know, all ought to yield to God, and therefore we beseech thee to govern us, that so all our Corruption may become subject, and by a ready Obedience to thy Will, confess, that thou art our God.

This must be the Effect of a Divine Power, thus to over-rule our perverse and wicked Inclinations; and therefore it is, that seeing, how perverse these are, we open our Hearts, and beg thy Divine Spirit to come and possess our Souls; that whereas of ourselves, we are so perversely bent upon Evil, we may have all this Evil subdued in us, by a Divine Strength, which of ourselves we cannot overcome.

Come therefore, O Holy Ghost, enter into our Souls, and now by thy Spirit may we live. We have hitherto been subject to great Variety of Weakness; the Spirit of Self-love, and of the World, have hitherto commanded the greatest Parts of our Lives; these have been our daily Counsel in all our Affairs, and the general Management of thy Blessings, we have put into their Hands. And hence, O God, by what an unhappy Spirit have we hitherto liv'd!

But, O most Gracious Lord, let now thy Holy Spirit take Place, and suffer us no more to be misled. Let this Divine Spirit take our Hearts from the World, and practically convince us, that all that belongs to this World, is Vanity and Affliction of Spirit: May it give us a Dislike of all, that has hitherto pleas'd us to the Prejudice of our Souls; and may we now have

no Relish in those Entertainments, which we know to be vain and foolish.

Lessen likewise in us, O God, all worldly Sollicitude, and let not the Concerns of this Life any more possess our Hearts with Excess. May we now settle this Principle in our Mind, That all the Things of this World are but momentary, they pass away daily; and whether they please or displease us, they must soon come to an end; and therefore, that we ought not to afflict ourselves about them, and much less, let the Concern for them take off our Hearts from Eternity.

Rather, O God, may this Conviction be ever pressing upon our Mind, That amidst all the various Distractions of Life, there is still but one Thing necessary, and that is, to serve thee, our God, and to work out our Salvation. And to this one Thing, O Holy Spirit, we beseech thee to turn our Hearts, to apply our Thoughts, and make it the Subject of our daily Sollicitude; that being created for the Possession of our God, we may not let the Concern for a few Moments, or the Love of Trifles, rob us of this Inheritance.

For this end, we beseech thee, O Holy Ghost, who didst confirm the Hearts of the Apostles, to confirm us also, and give us a settled Mind. Take from us all our usual Lightness and Inconstancy, by which

our best Purposes generally come to very little, and how often to nothing?

O God the Comforter, to thee we communicate this our Weakness, and beseech thee to have Compassion on us. We must confess, 'tis an afflicting Thought to us, when we reflect how many Resolutions we make of being more watchful over our Ways, and of reforming our usual Weaknesses, and yet still find ourselves under the same Infirmities; we sigh at our Disorders, and seem to judge ourselves unhappy under them: We turn but about, and presently forget all such our Unhappiness, and are no more apprehensive of its return, than if we really thought ourselves not concern'd in it.

This, O God, is a strange Lightness of Mind, such as is a great Reproach to us, especially in Affairs of Eternity, and, above all other Things, hinders us in advancing towards thee, our everlasting Good. Wherefore we beseech thee, O Holy Spirit, to remedy this Evil in us. Make us more serious in the Business of Salvation, and take from us this Inconstancy of Mind.

May we be more mindful of what we see is for our Good, and let not every Trifle be enough to turn the Business of Eternity out of our Thoughts. Confirm our Hearts with the true Love of our God,

and make it our most earnest Desire to come to the Possession of him; if thus our Souls were affected, that our only Happiness were in God; how shou'd we then keep our Souls watchful in this Affair, and make this our principal Sollicitude to remedy those Evils, which keep us at a Distance from him? In flame therefore, we beseech thee, our Hearts with the Fire of Divine Love; for the chief Reason, why we are so forgetful and inconstant in the Things of God, is because we do not love him, as we ought.

Besides this (Pardon us, O Lord, we beseech thee, for our Infirmitie oblige us to multiply our Petitions) vouchsafe to confirm our Hearts with Divine Strength, that in time of Trouble, we may not be dejected or so disorder'd, as to be render'd incapable of performing our Duty.

Help us, O Divine Spirit, help us, O our Heavenly Comforter, in this Point, patience thou didst the Apostles. We see them confirm'd by thy Grace, that tho' weak, fearful, and impatient of themselves, they stood constant in the Midst of the severest Trials, they rejoic'd in Tribulations, and then esteem'd themselves happy, when they were oppress'd with the greatest Sufferings.

Thus, O God, did they; and 'twas a We Evidence of the Holy Ghost abiding in them, that being yet subject to the Weakness, in

Whitsun-Monday.

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ness of Men, there appear'd a joyful Patience and Constancy in them, above that of Men.

'Tis this, O Divine Spirit, 'tis this we want; for tho' it be to our Shame, yet we must own our Weakness. We are very infirm in this Point; a very small Thing makes us uneasy, and an ordinary Provocation puts us out of all Patience; so far, that there scarce passes a Day over us, but in one Occasion or other, we shew how impatient we are.

This discovers too plainly our Weakness, and how much we are in Want of thy Help. Come therefore, O Holy Spirit, and give us new Strength; Strength, to bear with Patience the common Difficulties of Life; Strength, to bear with Patience our own Infirmities; Strength, to bear with Patience all Provocations given us by our Neighbour; Strength, to bear with Patience such Trials, as come from thy Heavenly Hand.

In all Troubles, Oppressions, and Persecutions, whether just or unjust, O God, grant us Patience, and from this Time may we find such a Change in ourselves, when thou to confess both thy Power and Goodness to us, O Holy Spirit, in this thy Festival. We have Reason to glorify thee every day for thy particular Mercy to the Martyrs, in giving them, not only Patience, but

but also Comfort and Courage under the most frightful Torments. O God! How glorious art thou in thy Saints! To see such weak Vessels, as we are, subject to Fear, and starting at every Thing that is painful; and yet chearfully to meet wild Beasts; to embrace the Rack with Comfort, to bow down to the Sword with Joy, and to stand fearless at the Approach of Death, attended with all its Horrors.

For this, O God, we bless thy Name, and now most humbly beg, that we also may find the Effect of thy Grace, in being deliver'd from our usual Impatience, and shewing the Work of thy Power, in a general Constancy of Mind, under all Difficulties. This is what we want, O God of Patience, mercifully hear our Prayer, and supply our Wants.

Say the Hymn, as on Sunday.

Let us pray.

O God, who didst send down the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles; hear the Prayer of thy People, that we, who, through thy Grace, have the Gift of a true Faith, may enjoy true Peace. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who liveth and reigneth in the Unity of the same Holy Ghost.

Whitsun-

Whitsun-Tuesday.

John x. I, 10.

***T**His Day being Part of the Festival of the Holy Ghost, let us beg of Almighty God, to send down his Holy Spirit upon us, that partaking of his Gifts, we may become more firm and constant in every Duty, and live by the Spirit of Christ.*

Let us pray.

EVer-blessed Redeemer, who didst send down the Holy Spirit, not only on thy Apostles, but likewise, as thou hadst promis'd, on others of thy Faithful, who were assembled with them, of both Sexes: Mercifully grant, that we also, who are here met together, to solemnize the Festival of the Holy Ghost, may all become the Temple of the same Holy Spirit, and that for our Light, our Comfort, and our Strength, he may abide with us for ever.

This, O most loving Jesus, we ask of thee, because we are taught by thy Sacred Word, that we cannot be thy Disciples,
or

or even hope to belong to thee, except we live and walk by thy Spirit; and that we cannot be the Children of God, if we are not led by the Spirit of God.

O Jesus! And how can this be, if thou giv'st not thy Holy Spirit to us; if thou tak'st not us also into Part of thy Promise, and pour'st not forth thy Spirit into our Hearts? Remember therefore us also, O Jesus, we beseech thee, and now on this great Solemnity, communicate to us the Holy Ghost; that he, dwelling in our Hearts, may chase from thence all those evil Spirits, which we have hitherto too much entertain'd, and by whom we have been too much directed and commanded, to the great Prejudice of all that belongs to our eternal Good.

Send therefore, we beseech thee, the Holy Ghost into our Hearts, and by his Sacred Presence and Almighty Power, may he chase from thence

The Spirit of Sloth, of Self-love, and of the Love of Ease. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Intemperance and Sensuality. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Pride, Vanity, and all manner of Ambition. *R. Amen.*

The Spirit of Envy and Contention. *R. Amen.*

The

The Spirit of Hatred, Detraction, and of all Kind of Uncharitableness. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Dissembling, Flattering, and Lying. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Revenge, Passion, and Impatience. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Incredulity and Prophane-ness. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of immoderate Sollicitude and worldly Care. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Tepidity, Coldness, and Indevotion. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Prodigality, and of Covetousness. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of the World, and of a disorderly Life. R. *Amen.*

The Spirit of Lightness and Inconstancy. R. *Amen.*

These, O God, and all other evil Spirits, may the Holy Ghost, this Day, chase from our Hearts, and deliver us from all that Power, they have hitherto had over us, that we may never more be govern'd by them, never more be led into Sin by their Suggestions.

Hear us, O God, in the Grant of these our Petitions, for we cannot but own it, as a subject of Shame and Confusion to us; that having for so many Years learnt thy Gospel, and profess'd ourselves thy Disciples and Followers, we are still so much influenc'd,

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influenc'd, and led on by the Spirit of the World, of a corrupt Nature, and of Sin, as if we were still Infidels, and had no Knowledge of thy Gospel, or Faith in thee, our Redeemer, Blessed for evermore.

This, O Blessed Jesus, is a Trouble to us, to see, how unlike we are to what we profess; for what have thy Followers, O Jesus, to do with those evil Spirits, the Spirit of the World, the Spirit of Corruption, and the Spirit of Sin, which by our Profession, we are oblig'd to renounce? O Divine Saviour, we shou'd have nothing to do with 'em, but only to renounce 'em.

Hear us therefore, we beseech thee, and being now sensible of our inward Deformity, mercifully deliver us from it: Deliver us from all that Tyranny, by which we have hitherto been enslav'd. Deliver us from all those evil Spirits, to whom we have freely open'd our Breasts, and have as readily hearken'd to them, as we ought to have done to thee, our Lord, and our God.

Thus, O Divine Redeemer, have we made these our Idols, we have serv'd them, as so many false Gods, in as much as for them we have forsaken the Ways of thee, our Lord, and departing from thy Gospel, have chosen to follow them.

But

But 'tis enough, O God, 'tis enough, to have been so long misled by these false Guides. Now, Blessed Lord, let thy Holy Spirit take place, and may we become wholly subject to his Conduct. He is our Lord, and may we obey him; he is our God, and may we hear his Voice in all Things.

Come, Holy Ghost, take Possession of our Hearts, cleanse them from all Evil, and sanctify them a holy Habitation to thee for ever.

Govern our Inclinations, our Affections and Desires; turn them from all that is carnal, corrupt, and worldly; give them a Relish of what is Holy, and teach them to delight in our Lord.

Command our Tongue, and now from this Moment, put it under such a Restraint, that it may no more become the Instrument of Sin. Teach us, when to be silent, and when to speak, and let neither Indiscretion nor Passion carry it into any Excess.

Undertake the Conduct of all our Conversation: Let neither Pride nor other Vice have any Part in us: Teach us to walk circumspectly, so as to give no Offence either to Jew or Gentile. May our whole Life be season'd with Moderation, Charity and Humility, and grant, in all Things, we may be blameless and harmless,

as

as the Sons of God, and Followers of Christ.

Let thy holy Influence direct us in all that belongs to human Life; in our Cloathing, Table, and Expenses, in the Distribution of our Time, in our Dealings, and whatever else falls within our Sphere. In all, O God, may thy Holy Spirit go along with us, and ever put us in Mind of thy Holy Will: May it shew us, what the Gospel teaches, and make us zealous in governing both our inward and outward Man by that Rule.

Give ear, O God, and be favourable to us in these our Petitions; for, behold, we see ourselves so very perverse and corrupt, and find so many Reasons to carry us out of the Way of all Reason and Duty, that if the Power of thy Holy Spirit does not over-rule our Inclination, and by his Heavenly Light direct our Reason in the Choice of what is good, we can see no Hopes, but of perishing under our own Blindness and Corruption.

Be merciful therefore, we beseech thee, and let thy Holy Spirit be a Light to our Reason; suffer it not to be bias'd by our Interest, Affection or Custom; let it not be darken'd by Self-love or Passion, but let all Things help us to discern and judge aright; for how miserable must it be, if our Light becomes Darkness, and then

wh

which should be our Guide, leads us out of the Way? Come therefore, O Holy Ghost, and preserve us from all Delusion: Help us in every Choice, teach us, in all Things, to discern what is well-pleasing to thee, and may we never take the Way of Self-love, or the World, for the Way of the Gospel.

But not only to discern; teach us likewise, O God, to walk in the Way, that is right; for in this also we are in Want of thy particular Help. Grant us therefore, we beseech thee, such a Firmness and Steadiness of Mind, as, in all Circumstances, to pursue our Duty, and never to be over-aw'd by Fear or Shame, or by any Consideration of what the World will say.

This is very difficult to our infirm Nature, which receives such strong Impressions from Things that are present, and is more concern'd about the Censures of Men, than at thy Judgments, O God.

But now we most earnestly entreat thy Mercy, to remedy this Weakness in us. Give us Grace to go on steadily, where our Duty leads us. Let it now be our Method to consider this one Point only, *What thy Will*; and to keep fixt to it, whatever be the discouraging Circumstances, that seem to attend it.

May

May we never more be ashamed of being faithful to our God, nor any more join in what is sinful, for fear of being laugh'd at. Raise our Hearts and our Concern, O God, above the mean Consideration of the Judgments of Men, and may we learn to rejoice under such Reproaches, as Duty brings upon us. 'Tis thou only, O God, art to be our Judge, and therefore may it be our daily Sollicitude to seek thy Favour. But, as for the World, may we leave it to its Liberty of judging, and never, never, O God, compliment it so far, as to be mad, because that is so.

This, O Blessed Lord, must be the Work of thy Holy Spirit in us; and therefore it is, we now send up our Prayers and Sighs to thy Throne, imploring thy Mercy in our Behalf; that thou wouldst have Compassion on such poor, weak Creatures as we are, who believing an Eternity before us, are so easily put out of the Way that leads to Happiness; and confessing thee to be our God, let every trifling Occasion be enough to offend thee, and are more fearful of the Breath of Men, than of thy Judgments.

Help us, O God, and heal us; for we are weak and miserable. Let thy Holy Spirit descend upon us, and communicate new Strength to our Souls, that we may
be

Ember-Wednesday. 333

be more constant in our Profession, and more faithful in every Duty.

Say the Hymn, as on Sunday.

Let us pray.

A Ssist us, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the Power of thy Holy Spirit, that our Hearts may be purified according to thy Mercy, and we be defended from all Adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

Ember-Wednesday, and on the other
Days of this Octave.

John vi. 44, 52.

THis Day being part of the Solemnity of the Holy Ghost, let us offer our Prayers to the same Holy Spirit, and beg he will, this Day, descend upon us, and communicate to us those Holy Gifts and Graces, which are the surest Marks of his abiding in us.

Let

Let us pray.

O Divine Spirit, third Person of the Sacred Trinity, who proceeding from the Father and the Son, art the same God with them from all Eternity, have Mercy on us, in this Day of thy Festival, and descending into our Hearts, leave there the Blessing of thy Sacred Gifts, that by them this poor, unhappy Clay may be rais'd above its natural Weakness, and be prepar'd to seek everlasting Happiness in the Possession of its God.

O Blessed Spirit, thou know'st all our Infirmities, and the infinite Dangers, in which we are, amidst all that Corruption, with which we are encompass'd: Thou see'st unavoidable Ruin before us, through our great Blindness and Rashness, if by the Effects of the Divine Goodness it be not prevented.

Have Compassion therefore on us in this our manifold Misery, which we daily increase to ourselves; and now manifest thy infinite Goodness to us. Perfect in us the Work of our Salvation: In Christ our Lord we have a plentiful Redemption, and through his Mercy, nothing is wanting for making our Peace with God. But still O Divine Spirit, we are blind and we are cold and insensible; we are weak and

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inconstant; we are bent upon what is earthly; we are fond of Deceit, and seek those Things, with greatest Eagerness, which lead to Precipices, and to our eternal Ruin.

See therefore, how much we stand in need of thy Help. Come then, O God of Love, O God of infinite Goodness, and help us, who call upon thee, who acknowledge our Misery, and thy Power; who have seen thy Wonders, even in Vessels of Weakness, and praise thee for the Mercies, thou hast shew'd to others; but now, O God, may we find in ourselves the Effects of thy Goodness, for which we may give thee Praise, both now and for ever. This we ask with one Voice, and let it be one Joy to us, to find the Grant of our Petitions.

Grant we may have a true Fear of God in our Hearts, by which we may be always apprehensive of his Judgments, and be more afraid of offending him, than of all the Evils, we can suffer in this Life. *R. Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this thy Gift of Fear.*

Grant our Hearts may be so inclin'd to God, as through a Sense of his Goodness, to love and seek his Glory, to be zealous in his Service, and forward in all those Exercises, by which we may have Hopes of approaching to him. *R.*

Grant

Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this thy Gift of Piety.

Grant our Understandings may be so enlightned, that amidst all the Snares of the World, the Practices of Men, the Effects of Education, and the Frauds of Self-love, we may still discern what is thy Holy Will, and what is the Way, which Christ has taught. R. *Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this Gift of Knowledge.*

Grant, we may have Courage to perform, in all Things, what we know to be our Duty, and that no human Considerations, regard to Company or the World, may be able to dissuade us from the Execution of thy Will. R. *Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this Gift of Fortitude.*

Grant, we may ever have Sense to discover those many Snares, by which the Devil and the World undertake to deceive us; and that no Colour of Piety or Innocence, or other Convenience, may be able to perswade us into the Dangers of Sin. R. *Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this Gift of Counsel.*

Grant, we may see it reasonable, to submit to all the Mysteries, which God has reveal'd, and never question or dispute his Truths, for being not suitable to our Apprehension. R. *Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this Gift of Understanding.*

Grant, TOM.

Grant, we may order all our Lives to the Glory of God, whose Creatures we are; and amidst the many Necessities of Life, still seek, before all Things, the Kingdom of God. R. *Grant us, O Holy Spirit, this Gift of Wisdom.*

Besides these, O Eternal and Divine Spirit, infuse into our Souls, those Graces, which are the Fruit of thy Residence.

Give us, we beseech thee, the Spirit of *Charity*, by which, amidst the various Delusions of the World, we may love God above all Things, and our Neighbour, as ourselves. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Joy and Peace*, by which our Souls may be supported with the Comfort of a good Conscience, and of thy Holy Will being done in us, while Trouble and Affliction press hard upon us. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Patience and Longanimity*, that we may not faint under Troubles, nor be tir'd with a Succession of Evils; but hold out with a due submission to thy Will, and a comfortable Hope in the Promises of Christ. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Goodness and B benignity*, that we may be inclin'd with Affection to thy Law, and with Compassion every Neighbour, that nothing of Hard-

ness be found in us, either towards God or Man. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Mildness*, that being affable and gentle towards all, we may cast off all Passion, Severity and Roughness, and treat with all in the Spirit of our Master. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Fidelity*, that with an industrious and watchful Care, we may satisfy whatever Obligations belong to our State, whether in regard of God, our Neighbour, or ourselves. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Modesty*, that being under the Restraint of Virtue and Prudence, we may fall into no kind of Excess; but be moderate in every Thing, both as to the Government of our Desires, and the Use of all Creatures. R. *Amen.*

Give us the Spirit of *Continency* and *Chastity*, that we may not live according to the Flesh, but keeping it in due Subjection to the Spirit, may preserve a clean Heart, and thus prepare for seeing God. R. *Amen.*

Hear us, O Blessed Spirit; and grant these our Petitions, our Necessities oblige us to ask; and may thy Goodness oblige thee to grant them. We see very plainly our manifold Miseries, and that through the great Corruption of our Heart, through our general Rashness and Blindness, we

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can expect nothing but Destruction, if we are left to ourselves, and to our own Ways.

What therefore can we do, but cry out to thee, and repeat our Cries, laying before thee our Miseries, and desiring Help? For thou art the Father of the Poor, the Comforter of the Afflicted, the Light of those, that are in Darknes. Come therefore, O God of Comfort and Goodness; have Compassion on such poor Creatures, as we are, and help us under all our Misery. Deliver us from our own Spirit, and give us thine; give us all those Helps, which are necessary to carry us through all the Dangers of this World, and bring us to the State without Danger, even to the Possession of our God.

Say the Hymn, as on Sunday.

Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, that thy Holy Spirit, which proceeds from thee, may enlighten our Hearts, and guide us into all Truth, according to the Promise of thy Son: Who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity of the same Holy Ghost.

It being Ember-Week, let us join in Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, as the Church requires; and offer our Petitions to God, in

particular for those, who, at this time, have been, or are, promoted to Holy Orders, throughout the Church, that the Holy Ghost may rest upon them, and every way prepare them for that great and difficult Charge, to which they are call'd.

Let us pray.

O Blessed God, who, by the Blood of thy only Son, hast purchas'd to thyself a Church, for the Glory of thy Name, and for instructing the whole World in thy saving Truths, mercifully secure it under thy Protection, and fulfill all thy Promises to it, that it may answer all those holy Purposes, for which it was ordain'd. Be thou the Pastor of all its Pastors, and by the Influence of thy Grace, so direct and govern them, that they may be so many Lights to the Flock, and both by Word and Example, lead them in the Way of Salvation.

In a more special manner we recommend to thy fatherly Care all those, who at this time are promoted to Holy Orders throughout the Church. Send forth thy Holy Spirit, we beseech thee, upon them, and give them Understanding, that they may truly apprehend the Sanctity of the Profession, and the Greatness of the Charge.

Gratuitous

Ember-Wednesday. 34^r

Grant to them the Spirit of Wisdom, that they may discern the Things, not only, that are lawful, but likewise expedient, and never do any thing unbecoming their Character.

Grant them likewise Wisdom, to discern between Leper and Leper, that they may contrive all Things for the good of Souls, as neither to discourage the sincere, nor to flatter those, who are not truly converted from their evil Ways.

Grant them a holy Spirit, that being chosen out of the World, they may never follow the Ways of the World, but by their Example, condemn all its Extravagancies and Disorders.

Grant them a Holy Spirit, that they may be worthy Ministers of the Altar, they may have a Horror of approaching to it and bowing worthily.

Grant them the Spirit of Zeal, that they may be industrious in promoting whatever is for thy Glory, and the Edification of those, who are their Neighbour.

Grant them a laborious Spirit, that they may spare no Pains in the Obligations of their Function, and every Day give their Lives for their Flock.

Grant them the Spirit of Constancy, that they may never be aw'd by Power or Interest, into a Compliance with what is prejudicial to Justice or Truth.

Grant them the Spirit of Perseverance, that they may never be tir'd in their Endeavours for doing Good, whatever Difficulties or Discouragements they meet with.

Grant them the Spirit of true Charity, that having an Abhorrence of Covetousness, and of all that has the Appearance of loving Money, they may be ever ready to serve all, and look for no other Recompence, than Christ himself, into whose Lot they are chosen.

Hear us, O merciful Lord, in the Grant of these our Petitions, that the Ministers of thy Altar may be vested with Holiness and walk in all Things, according to the Sanctity of their Vocation; that when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away, and meet the Comfort of many Souls sav'd through their Labours.

To thy fatherly Providence, O God, we likewise recommend the Fruits of the Earth, begging, that, by thy Blessing, they may go on prosperously to a plentiful Harvest. We also beseech thee to preserve us from all pestilential Distempers, both Man and Beast, and grant us such a Sense of Gratitude, that the Enjoyment of thy Blessings may oblige us, not only to be thankful, but likewise faithful to our Benefactor.

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St. Andrew, Nov. 30. 343

factor. Hear us, O most Gracious Lord,
and in thy Mercy grant these our Requests,
Amen.

*The same is to be repeated on Friday and
Saturday, being Ember-Days.*

On the Feasts.

St. Andrew, November 30.

Matt. iv. 18, 22.

*IT being the Day of St. Andrew the Apostle,
who being call'd by Christ, while he was
casting his Net into the Sea, immediately left
all and follow'd him; let us now make it our
Petition to God, that we also may truly become
the Disciples of Christ, and follow wherever
he calls.*

Let us pray.

*O God, who, in thy Apostles, hast
taught us what it is to be a Follower
of Christ, be favourable to us on this
Day, which lays before us so great an Ex-
ample, and grant that from him we may
learn,*

344 St. Andrew, Nov. 30.

learn, with proportion to our respective Circumstances, how to become in earnest the Disciples of Christ.

Teach us, at least, that one Lesson, of leaving our Nets for him, and upon his Call. For thou know'st, O God, that we have our Nets, in which we are engag'd: Thou know'st how far we are entangled in them, either so as to be wholly drawn from thee, or very much hinder'd in thy Service.

How this stands with us is wholly known to thee, the Searcher of Hearts: But in whatever manner it be, we here confess it before thee to be our Misfortune; and we most earnestly beseech thee, on this Day of thy Apostle, that we may learn to forsake our Nets.

Grant therefore we may open our Hearts to Christ calling upon us: Grant we may have a true Sense of his infinite Mercy and Love to our Souls, who so often puts us in mind of our Unhappiness, so often calls us from our evil Ways, and suffers us not to find Rest out of him.

O God, this is a great Mercy to us, who might otherwise go on Blind and Unthinking into the Depth of Sin, and irrecoverable Misery. Blessed therefore be our Redeemer for this his Goodness; but leave not this Mercy, O God, unfinish'd

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in us ; perfect it, we beseech thee, and by thy Grace so quicken us with a Sense of Gratitude to him, and of our own Interest, that we may with Violence break from all our Snares, remove all Impediments, and overcome all those Weaknesses, which have hitherto kept us back, and been our hindrance from following where he has call'd.

Give ear to our Petition, O God, in this Point, and shew Mercy to us, for we confess here the great want we have of thy Mercy. We often see our Disorders, and foresee something of the Unhappiness, into which they lead us ; we see a Necessity of changing our Life, and often make Proposals of it : But Ah, Blessed God ! How soon do we forget all such Purposes ! How little is enough to overthrow all our Resolutions ! And thus we still find ourselves going on in the same Way, which we so often purpos'd to forsake. This is the principal Occasion of our Unhappiness ; but now, O Blessed God, we beseech thee to remove it. Confirm our Resolutions of Amendment, and give us Grace effectually to forsake whatever, by the Direction of the Gospel, we are to forsake. Make us steady in this, and secure us by thy fatherly Hand against all relapses.

Let us no more live on in sinful Ways, no more walk on in dangerous Ways, no more nourish Poison in our Breast, no more seek Divertisement with the hazard of Eternity, no more follow the World and Self-love to the Brink of Hell: No, O most loving Father, let it be no longer thus with us: Call us from this Unhappiness, and, by the Help of thy Grace, may we in earnest forsake it.

Let not Custom prevail, or ever more by its Violence carry us back to our evil Ways. R. *Amen.*

Let not Self-love have Power against us. R. *Amen.*

Let no Favour to Inclinations make us false to our Purposes. R. *Amen.*

Let not the World, or any Example, discourage us from pursuing our Resolutions. R. *Amen.*

Let not Company be able to move us from our good Designs. R. *Amen.*

Let not an inconstant, unthinking Temper any more be the Occasion of forsaking the Ways of the Gospel. R. *Amen.*

No, Blessed Lord, let nothing prevail but from the Example of thy Apostles may we learn so to follow thee, as, like them, never to forsake thee, but still to persevere, amidst all Difficulties, till we come to a State which will admit of no Separations. *Amen.*

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St. Andrew having follow'd Christ, and faithfully discharg'd the Apostolick Function in preaching the Gospel, was at length seiz'd and condemn'd to die on a Cross; which was so far from being a Terror to him, that he express'd a great Desire, by such a Death, to give up his Soul to God, and therefore embraced the Cross with Joy; hence let us pray, this Day, for a large Portion of his Holy Spirit; that from his Example, we may learn to bear our Cross with Patience and Comfort.

Let us pray.

O God, who, both for our Trial and Punishment, hast been pleas'd that our Life should be mixt with many Tribulations; mercifully assist us with thy Holy Grace, that we may bear them with such a Spirit, as becomes the Disciples of Jesus.

Such a Spirit, O Blessed Lord, as we see in this Holy Apostle, who desirous of following his Master, was not afraid of the Cross; but knowing how great an Advantage it would be to him, embraced it with Joy, esteeming it an Honour for the Disciple to come so near the Resemblance of his Master's Death.

O Blessed Jesus, 'tis a Comfort to us to see thy Apostles inherit so much of thy Spirit,

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Spirit, taking up their Cross, as thou commandest, to follow thee with Joy. Eternal Praise be to thy Holy Name, for this thy Mercy to them; for this we bow down and adore thee, for this may all Generations glorify thee for ever.

But while we admire and honour this Holy Spirit in these thy faithful Servants, we have Reason to be confounded within ourselves, who professing to follow the same Master, can discover so very little of their Spirit in us.

Who acknowledge it our Duty to bear all Troubles with Patience; who believe the Rewards, thou hast promis'd to such, as take up their Cross; who honour all those as Happy, who have suffer'd for thee; and yet when it comes to our share to suffer any Thing, tho' but inconsiderable, immediately lose all Patience, forget our Profession, with all thy Promises, and begin to sink under the Thoughts of our Unhappiness, as if the Cross belong'd not to us, and was not design'd to exercise, but destroy, our Faith.

This, O God, we confess to be too much our Practice, and we see it so very contrary to our Profession, that we cannot own our Weakness without shame; we cannot reflect upon it without humbling ourselves before thee, and beseeching thy Goodness to have Compassion on us, and

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by thy heavenly Grace to remedy this our Unhappiness.

Wherefore, O God of Infinite Mercy, behold we bow down before thee, we confess all our Impatience, and want of Resignation; and that however we profess the Gospel, we are but little acquainted with the Spirit of Jesus. We beseech thee to look upon us, to give us new Strength, and a new Spirit, that we may not only admire in others, but likewise find in ourselves the Spirit of our Master.

O God, if it be thy Blessed Will, take from us our usual Weakness, which we often experience in time of any Trouble. Moderate in us all kind of Passion, Fretfulness, Impatience and Dejection of Spirit. We are very sensible these are not all agreeable to the Gospel, they become not a Disciple of the Cross.

Wherefore we most earnestly implore thy Goodness, O Jesus, to help us in this Point. Raise in us a Detestation of what is so very unlike thy Spirit, and the Example thou hast given us: Break the Force of Ill-Custom in us, and by thy Grace change our unhappy Temper.

Thy Love is Infinite to us unhappy Sinners, and thy Power is equal to thy Love: Both we, and all that is in us, is wholly subject to thee: Command therefore, O Jesus, these poor Worms, and let

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let nothing be found in us Rebellious to thee. Moderate in us all kind of Passion, Fretfulness, Impatience and Dejection of Spirit, for we know these are not agreeable to the Gospel, nor becoming the Disciples of the Cross.

Give us therefore, we beseech thee, an Humble Mind, and True, Solid Patience, that with a peaceable Submission we may bear all the Troubles of this Life. R. *Grant us this, O God, because neither Impatience nor Dejection become the Disciples of the Cross.*

Give us, we beseech thee, a true Sense of thy All-governing Power, and hence may we receive with Content, whatever befalls us by thy Appointment or Permission. R. *Grant us this, O God, because neither Impatience nor Dejection become the Disciples of the Cross.*

Give us, we beseech thee, such a lively Faith, that we may know how to value the Love of our Jesus crucified, and even rejoice in being united with him in bearing our Cross. R. *Grant us this, O God, because neither Impatience nor Dejection become the Disciples of the Cross.*

Give us, we beseech thee, such a Government of ourselves, that we may keep in Subjection all those Inclinations, Motions, Passions, and inward Disturbance, which put us out of that Way which thou,
O Jesus,

O Jesus, and thy Apostles have taught us.
*R. Grant us this, O God, because 'tis Pa-
tience, and even bearing the Cross with Com-
fort, that becomes the Disciples of the Cross.*

Grant these our Petitions, O God, and
on this Day of thy Apostle, who express'd
such a Love for the Cross, may we re-
nounce all those evil Ways, which are un-
becoming the Cross, and from this Time
begin to suffer as thou, O Jesus, hast
taught us both in thyself and thy Apostles.
Let this be thy Mercy to us this Day;
and now, as often as we perceive any
Cross prepared for us, may we embrace it
with Joy, as St. *Andrew* did. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

WE humbly beseech thy Majesty, O
Lord, that as the Apostle St. *An-
drew* was both a Preacher and Governour
in thy Church, so he may be a perpetual
Intercessor with thee in our behalf. Thro'
our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

Con-

*Conception of the Blessed Virgin,
December 8.*

Matt. i. 1, 16.

THis being the Day of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, let us give Thanks to Almighty God for this his Mercy in the Singular Prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin, and in thus preparing for the Redemption of Man.

Let us pray.

THis Day was Conceiv'd the Blessed Virgin Mary from the Stock of David, by whom Salvation appear'd to Believers, whose Glorious Life gave Light to the World; let us Celebrate with Joy the Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

R. Let us Celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; let us adore Christ her Son, our Lord.

This is that Glorious Virgin, of whom it was promis'd from the Beginning of the World, that she should bruise the Serpent's Head, and by her Seed concur to the Redemption of Man.

R. Let

Conception of the, &c. 353

R. Let us Celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; let us adore Christ her Son, our Lord.

This is that Glorious Virgin, whose Humility our Lord regarded, and who was chosen out of all Women to be Mother of our Redeemer.

R. Let us Celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; let us adore Christ her Son, our Lord.

This is that Glorious Virgin, who, by a Message from Heaven, was declared Full of Grace, and that our Lord was with her, and by the Spirit of God is stil'd, Blessed amongst Women.

R. Let us Celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; let us adore Christ her Son, our Lord.

This is that Glorious Virgin, who, upon the Angel's declaring, conceiv'd the Saviour of the World, and became Mother of our Redeemer.

R. Let us Celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; let us adore Christ her Son, our Lord.

Let us pray.

O God, who in the Conception of the Blessed Virgin didst prepare for the great Work of Man's Redemption; Grant that we, who have a true Faith of this Mercy,

R. Let

Mercy, may now find the Effects of it in the Good of our Souls.

And be thou Blessed, O God, on this Day; may the Works of thy Mercy be the Encrease of thy Glory: For this End behold we now bow down, adore and magnify thy Holy Name, giving Thanks for all thy Goodness to us undeserving Sinners, and beseeching thee that the Sense of thy Mercies may so enter into our Hearts, as to go beyond the Ceremony of keeping a Day, and oblige us to be ever faithful to thee. *Amen.*

On this Festival let us put in our Petitions to God, that, whereas his Grace was so eminent in the Blessed Virgin, as to appear in so many Prerogatives of Holiness, we also may on this Day partake of the same Divine Gift, and imitate those Virtues, which in her we admire.

Let us pray.

O God of Mercy, look upon us, we beseech thee, this Day, that while we honour thy Gifts in the Blessed Virgin, we may endeavour to imitate her Virtues, and have a Part in that Glory, which is the Reward of her Sanctity.

There is nothing we can desire more than thy Favour, O God; and by what Means can we more effectually seek it, than

than by following her Example, who was so grateful in thy Sight? Grant therefore it may be our daily Endeavour to follow there, where we see her so well-pleasing to thee.

It was her great Humility, thy Gift, which turn'd thy Eyes upon her; for this wast thou pleas'd to distinguish her by particular Blessings from all Women, and chuse her to be Mother of our Lord. Grant we may endeavour to imitate her in her Humility. *R. Grant it, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

For this End, O Lord, grant we may never value ourselves, or despise our Neighbour, upon any suppos'd Advantage, but ever give the Glory to thee, our God, and still remain humble in our own Eyes, under the Conviction of our own real and manifold Unworthiness. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant that upon the lively Sense of our own sinful Unworthiness against thee, our God, we may ever judge ourselves the most Vile and Contemptible of all thy Creatures; and hence conclude it an unreasonable Injustice, for us to use any Means, either in Words or Actions, for gaining Esteem, or being thought Valuable in the World. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Grant that upon the same Motive we may conclude Contempt to be our Due, and hence

hence receive all Reproach, Contempt, Abjection and Oppression, whether from thy Hand, O God, or from our Neighbour, with a contented Mind, and even humble ourselves under it, as justly belonging to us. *R. Grant this, O God, we beseech thee.*

The singular Purity of the Blessed Virgin being likewise what very much recommended her to thy Favour, O God, we ask likewise this Grace, that we may obtain a clean Heart, and never do any thing that can defile it.

Let thy Grace therefore, O God, strengthen us against all Evil of this kind, and for this End help us, we beseech thee, in keeping a strict Watch upon our Heart, that we may fence it against all sensual Affections, and never suffer it to take any Pleasure in what is so contrary to the Sanctity of our Profession, and so displeasing to thee.

Help us likewise, O merciful Lord, in keeping a like Guard upon our Thoughts, so as to allow them no liberty of sinful Amusements, but, without any Delay, to banish from them whatever is in itself evil, or under any disguise, is likely to lead into Sin.

Teach us likewise, O Lord, to govern our Words, our Actions, and all our Senses, so as to let none of these be the Instruments of Sin. We know, O God, how Holy our

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Profession is; we know how Solemnly we have renounc'd the Devil and his Works; we know with how great a Price we have been redeem'd from the Slavery of the Devil; and therefore that it must be a Sin unto Damnation to give our Hearts, our Bodies, our Tongues, our Senses, after this, to the Command and Service of the Devil.

Deliver us therefore, O God, we beseech thee, from all his Shares, give us Strength to stand against his Assaults, and may we never concur in any thing, that can be Serviceable to the Designs he has of our Ruin. Create in us a clean Heart, and by this may we labour to see thee, our God, and be Companions of those, who follow the Lamb.

There being also a wonderful Comfort in the Blessed Virgin, by which she became entirely resign'd to thy Holy Will under all Troubles, and in this was well-pleasing to thee; mercifully grant, O Blessed Lord, that it may be our daily Endeavour in this to follow her Steps.

That in Time of Trouble, we may labour to be Patient. R. *Grant this, O God.*

That under every Weight, we may labour to preserve a compos'd Mind. R. *Grant this, O God.*

That

358 *Conception of the, &c.*

That under all Disappointments, Losses and Afflictions, we may with a ready Submission embrace all thy Appointments. R. *Grant this, O God.*

That in all inward Oppression, Pain, Sickness, and in Death, our Wills may be wholly resign'd to thine, O God. R. *Grant this, O God.*

Let us pray.

O Almighty and everlasting God, who know'st the great Difficulty we have in all kind of Suffering, and how many Ways we offend thee, through our usual Impatience; grant us now, we beseech thee, a better Spirit, and confirm us in such a true Submission, that amidst all kinds of Troubles we may stand firm, and never lose our Peace in thee.

Grant us likewise such a solid Zeal for all that is Good, that we may at all Times set before us the Life of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, and from her Example and Crown be spur'd on to the Imitation of whatever we see Eminent in her; that tho' we can have no Hopes of coming up with her, yet we may have the Comfort of following her, tho' at a distance; grant us, O Lord, thy Grace, for 'tis thus only we can hope to see the Effect of our Prayers.

Let

Ember-Wednesday in Dec. 359

Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, bestow on thy Servants the Gift of thy Heavenly Grace, that the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin's Conception may be to them the Encrease of Peace, to whom her bringing forth a Son was the Beginning of Salvation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who lives, &c.

Ember-Wednesday in Dec.

IT being Ember-Week, in which we are required to humble ourselves in Fasting and Prayer; let us comply with the Orders of the Church, and now offer both our Fast and our Prayer to Almighty God, as the Church directs. And first let us pray for the Fruits of the Earth.

O God, by whose Blessing the Earth is fruitful for the Relief of our Necessities, be favourable to us at this Time, and give us thy wonted Blessing to the Earth, that whatever Seed is committed to it may bring forth its encrease for our Support and Comfort; and that finding the wonder-

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360 Ember-Wednesday in Dec.

derful Effects of thy Goodness, we may be mindful of the Mercy, and give thee the Glory.

Wherefore, O God, we beseech thee, look not upon our Unworthiness, nor upon those manifold Sins, by which we ungratefully abuse the Fruits of the Earth, in the Support of our Luxury, Gluttony and Intemperance: For if thou regardest these, we confess nothing can be expected by us, but the withdrawing of all thy Blessings, in punishment of our Iniquities.

We beseech thee therefore, O God, let not thy Justice, but thy Mercy, take place: We confess our Sins, while we ask thy Favours; and hope, that as in former Times thou hast been mov'd with Compassion to thy People, upon their humbling themselves in Fasting and Prayer, so likewise thou wilt have regard to our Humiliation, and deal with us more mercifully, than our Sins deserve.

Hear us therefore, O God, and for the sake of thy Elect continue to us thy usual Blessings. Let the Earth be water'd with thy Heavenly Dew, and by thy Benediction may it bring its Encrease, that we being supplied with our necessary Support may every Day praise thy Name, and partaking of thy Gifts, never fail in our Thanksgiving to thee the Giver.

Ember-Wednesday in Dec. 361

*Let us pray likewise for all those, who
at this Time receive Holy Orders.*

O God, who hast ordain'd thy Church to be provided with Pastors for the Good of the Flock, have Mercy on all those, who at this Time are promoted to Holy Orders. Give them a Spirit answerable to their Function, that they may be a Light to all those, who are to be under their Charge. Give them a Zeal for the Good of Souls, that they may be ready to do Good to all, according to their Necessities, and be prepar'd at all Times to give their Life for their Flock.

And since thou hast call'd them out of the World, let the World, we beseech thee, have no part in them: Grant, therefore, they may separate themselves from all Corrupt and Dangerous Ways, and never do any Thing unbecoming the Sanctity of their State. Take from them all degrees of Covetousness, and may they have nothing for filthy Gain.

O God, be thou their Guide and Counsellor in all their Ways, both in their Business, their Conversation and Divertisements, that in no part of their Lives they may give Offence to any, but do all to the Edification of their Neighbour, and to the Increase of thy Glory, O God.

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*Let us pray likewise for a Seasonable Time,
that God would preserve us from all
Pestilential Distempers.*

O God, in whose Hands are all Creatures, mercifully dispose all, so that they may contribute to our Life and Health, and not to our Destruction. We must acknowledge, we have offended thee in all thy Creatures; and that, if all these were to be arm'd against us, we could not complain of any Injustice, because our Sins deserve even the greatest of thy Rewards.

But, O God, behold we appeal to thy Goodness, beseech thee to forgive our Iniquities, and to oblige us to be more Faithful to thee by the Wonders of thy Mercy and not of thy Justice. Wherefore, O God, have Compassion on us at present and grant us a good Season; deliver us from all Pestilential Distempers, whether in Man or Beast; give us a healthy Time; and by the Enjoyment of thy Blessings, convince us of our Ingratitude and overcome our Evil by thy Good. Help us, O Blessed Lord; look upon the Humiliation of thy People, and mercifully grant our Requests. *Amen.*

*The same is to be repeated on Friday
Saturday of this Week.*

St. Thomas, Dec. 21.

John xx. 24, 29.

HIS being the Day of *St. Thomas* the Apostle, who, when *Jesus* was going to *Judea*, and his Disciples apprehended at *Danger*, cried out to them, Let us go and die with him; hence let us take Occasion to beg of *God* this Spirit, that may ever accompany *Christ* in all his ways, and rather venture our Lives, than depart from him.

Let us pray.

GOD, by the Direction of whose Goodness we are requir'd to observe Days of the Apostles, that by honouring their Memories we may be led on and encourag'd by their Example; mercifully assist us, that we may keep this Day with such a disposition of sincere Piety and Faith, that we may receive the Effects, thy Goodness design'd for thy Faithful in the Institution of it.

And since we have so Eminent an Example of Zeal in the Apostle, whose Festival

val we celebrate this Day, grant us, we beseech thee, O Lord, such Grace, that we may learn this Lesson, and every Day live in the Practice of it.

Grant we may become true Disciples of our Master, and not only follow him in such easy Ways, where we have Inclination or Interest to lead us on, but likewise where we have Difficulties and Discouragements to meet us; that being prov'd in these, and found Faithful, we may receive from thee an Everlasting Crown.

Grant we may unite ourselves every Day with the Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, that as he offer'd himself to Death for us, so likewise, with this Apostle, we may be always in a Disposition of Dying with him.

Hence, O God, we ask this Spirit of thee, that we may at all Times be upon the watch, to observe what part of our Lives Christ demands of us, and as his Law requires of us, so we may be ready to make a Surrender.

If he calls upon us, in the Discharge of our Duty, to part with our Ease and Rest; grant we may surrender it, and far be prepar'd to join our Sacrifice with his, and die with him. *R. Grant this, Lord, we beseech thee.*

If he calls upon us, for the Observance of his Commands, to part with our Inclinations and Desires; grant we may surrender them, and so far be prepar'd to join our Sacrifice with his, and die with him. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

If he calls upon us to part with Companies and from the Ways of the World, that so we may forsake the Dangers of Sin, and live by his Spirit; grant we may surrender ourselves, and so far be prepar'd to join our Sacrifice with his, and die with him. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

If he calls upon us, by the Appointments of his Providence, to go through many Troubles, or by Losses, Pain or Sickness, to part with all the Comforts of Life, and be forsaken by Men; grant we may surrender ourselves, and so far be prepar'd to join our Sacrifice with his, and die with him. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

If he calls upon us to part with our Goods, our Liberty or Life, in Testimony of our Fidelity to his Gospel; grant we may surrender ourselves, and be prepar'd even so far to join our Sacrifice with his, and die with him. *R. Grant this, O Lord, we beseech thee.*

Hear us, O Lord, we beseech thee, and mercifully grant these our Petitions, for we are sensible, that, being the Disciples of Christ, 'tis our Duty to follow him; and that, being bought with the Price of his Blood, we are now his Right and Property, and we cannot refuse whatever he demands of us, tho' it be our Lives, without the Guilt of Injustice.

Deliver us therefore, O merciful Lord, from all Niceness and immoderate Self-love, such as sacrifices our Lives to our Inclinations, and not bearing the Difficulties of Self-denial, makes us Strangers to the Ways of thy Gospel; but grant us, we beseech thee, this part of an Apostolick Spirit, that we may be ever ready to follow thee wherever thou callest us, and never permit any Arguments of Self-love or the World to hinder us in this our Obedience. Come, Jesus, behold we open our Hearts to thee; come take Possession of us, and let thy Holy Spirit enlighten, direct and govern us, both now and for ever. Amen.

St. Thomas having doubted of Christ's Resurrection, was so far favour'd by his Master, as to put his Hands into his Sacred Wounds, and thus being cur'd of his Incredulity, cry'd out; My Lord and my God; hence let us make it our Petition, that God would please to confirm us against all Doubts

of

*of Faith, and likewise deliver the whole World
from Error and Infidelity.*

Let us pray.

O G O D, who see'st our manifold Weakness, and that we have no Remedy but from thy Hands, have Compassion on us, and be our Physician; heal all our Distempers, but particularly on this Day we beg the like Mercy thou wast pleas'd to shew to this thy Apostle: Suppress all Seeds of Infidelity that yet lie conceal'd in our Hearts, remove all Doubts, and mercifully confirm us in all those Truths, which thou hast reveal'd.

Deliver us from all undue workings of our *Imagination*, teach us to keep it within the Bounds of a just Restraint, and never suffer us to be so Indiscreet, as to confide in such an Undertaker, when it pretends to be an Examiner and Judge of thy Mysteries.

Deliver us, O God, from the ill Effects of a boundless *Curiosity*: And where thou hast been pleas'd to set a Vail, teach us to be content, without presuming to remove it, till it be done by thy Hand.

Deliver us from the Unreasonable Attempts of our own *Reason*, and let thy Grace be the Guide of this our Guiding Faculty.

Faculty. Prevent our being Wise in our own Conceits; and never let us undertake to measure, what at present we cannot see nor comprehend.

Teach us to submit to the *Darkness* of our State; and since the Desire of knowing was the first Occasion of Sin, may we now be content with the Punishment of it, and embrace the Justice of being bound to believe without seeing.

Thus O God, may all our Faculties be subject to thee, and confess thee to be their Lord and their God, by a ready Submission to what thou hast reveal'd. For my Part I acknowledge here before thee the Weakness and Uncertainty of my Reason and Judgment; I am subject to great Mistakes about common Objects, and am still worsted in all my Enquiries, and how then can I pretend to determine Mysteries, and pronounce upon Things Divine, without the Guilt of Presumption, and the Danger of Error?

Wherefore, O God, I here declare I have an entire Distrust of myself, and my Confidence is in thee. Thou art the Essential Truth, and canst not be deceiv'd; and I can have no Security from Error, but by hearing and believing thee. Hence, O Eternal Truth, I firmly assent, with an undoubting Faith, to all whatever thou hast taught, whether by thyself, or by those

whom

whom thou hast commanded me to hear: I give no Commission to my Reason to examine thy Truths, to see whether it approves them; but I only examine this one Point, whether they have thy Authority for being receiv'd, and with this I believe. For my Reason, O God, has nothing to do but to submit without doubting, where there is no Doubt of what thou hast said.

I beseech thee, O God, may this be my Method all my Life, and let thy Grace so strengthen me in it, that neither any Temptation of the Devil, nor melancholy Clouds, nor vain Philosophy nor Delusion of Reason, may ever oblige me to forsake it. Grant this, O God, and thus may I go on steady amidst all my natural Blindness and Weakness.

Grant the like Favour, O Lord, we beseech thee, to all Christians. Open the Eyes of such, as are in Error, in whatever Part of the World they be, and mercifully direct them to the Truth: In particular we ask for this Nation, that thou would'st please to heal all its Divisions, and bring all to the Unity of Faith: Remove all Blindness and Passion, and open the Hearts of all to understand how great an Interest they have in Truth.

Have Mercy likewise on all those Barbarous and Infidel Nations, who have not a

370 *Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25.*

Knowledge of thee their God, or of Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Thou hast infinite Ways in thy Providence, by which thou canst give them new Light, and bring them into thy Fold; shew this Mercy to them, we beseech thee, that all Nations may praise thy Goodness, and with one Voice glorify thy Holy Name.

Let us pray.

GRant, O Lord, we beseech thee, we may rejoice in the Solemnity of *Thomas* thy Blessed Apostle; that we may be always reliev'd by his Patronage, and with a becoming Piety follow him in his Faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25.

Matt. xix. 27, 29.

THIS being the Memorial of St. Paul's Conversion, when God call'd this great Persecutor of the Church to become so great an Apostle; let us on this Day implore the Mercy of God, that he will likewise call us from all our evil Ways, and make us his Faithful Servants.

Let

Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25. 371

Let us pray.

O Almighty and Everlasting God, whose Mercy is above all thy Works, and who hast given us a particular Instance of thy Goodness in the wonderful Conversion of this great Apostle: Grant, we beseech thee, that by the Encouragement of this Day's Mercy, we may duly seek for Mercy, and effectually find it.

O God, to whom is known the unhappy State of our Souls, through the many Iniquities we have committed, and the great Corruption to which we are at present subject; have Compassion on us, we beseech thee, and now touch our Hearts with a powerful Grace, that we may have a true Sense of our own inward Deformity, and a real Horror of all our Sins.

Make us now understand, how great has been the Evil of forsaking thee our God, and persecuting Jesus Christ by our Iniquities, who has shed his Blood for our Salvation. Open our Hearts, that we may see all the Evil we have done, and no longer go on Blind and Perverse to our own Destruction.

Stop us now in our Way, and let thy Heavenly Light shine upon us: Humble us to the Ground with *Saul*, and may the Apprehension of thy Judgments seize us
with

372 *Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25.*

with Terror: Give us a Dislike of our own Ways, and being convinc'd of the Corruption of our own Wills, may we now surrender ourselves entirely to the Conduct of thine, and with this Convert cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have us do?*

O God of infinite Mercy, shew this Mercy to us, and now (by thy Grace) change our Hearts. Give us a sincere and hearty Repentance; let us no more be deceiv'd with passing Purposes, but in good earnest forsake the Evil we have done, and undertake such Methods, by which we may overcome whatever Corruption is our present Danger.

Thou wast pleas'd to direct *Saul* to one, who was to teach him thy Will, and instruct him in all he was to do; shew the like Mercy to us also, O God, and let thy Providence put us under such Conduct, where we may be truly taught thy Holy Will. Hence, O Blessed Lord, we beseech thee to deliver us from all Deceit, and, while we propose to ourselves Repentance, may we never be so Contradictory to our own Designs, as to decline those Persons, who are most likely to teach us the Ways of true Repentance, and of thy Holy Will.

Grant likewise, in making our Peace with thee, we may farther observe thy own Method in the Conversion of this Sinner.

Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25. 373

ner. He was Three Days Blind; that is, by thy Order had his Eyes shut against the world, and totally retir'd from it for Three Days: For the same Time he kept a most rigorous Fast, without Eating or Drinking, and continu'd in Prayer. Thus was Time given him for Humiliation, Contrition and Penance, before *Ananias* impos'd his Hands upon him, as the Minister of Christ.

O God, this being thy own Prescription, in reconciling a Sinner, and this in the New Law; grant we may hence take our Measures; and as often as we depart from thee by Sin, endeavour by these Steps to return to thee, and seek the Favour of thy Peace. O God, if ever my Unhappiness be such, as to go at a distance from thee, may *St. Paul's Conversion* be the Rule of mine; for thus I may hope it to be Sincere.

But not only to us, but to all Sinners, O Lord, extend the Mercy of this Day. To thy Infinite Goodness therefore we recommend, O God, all such, as by Sin are under thy Displeasure; beseeching thee that, with *Saul*, they may find the Effects of thy Compassion.

Have Mercy on all those, who persecute thy Church, and are injurious to Christ in his Members. Open their Eyes, O Lord, we beseech thee, that they may see the Injustice

374 *Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 25.*

Justice of their Ways; that they may no longer be carried on by a mistaken Zeal, and think they do thee Service, while they are striking at thy Servants. Touch their Hearts, O God, and with *Saul* may all these receive new Light, and be Converted to thee.

Let all others, O Blessed Lord, partake of thy Mercy, who live in a Sinful State, who have turn'd away their Eyes from their God, and work Iniquity. Leave not these, we beseech thee, to themselves, nor give them up to a Reprobate Sense; but let thy Goodness be mov'd upon them, and give them a Sense of their Unhappiness.

We can plead nothing for them, being, thro' their Sins, unworthy of all thy Favours: But, O God, we appeal to thy Infinite Goodness, to that Goodness, which in Compassion to Sinners sent thy Only Son to seek the Lost Sheep, and bring him back to thy Fold. Let this have regard to them, for behold they are as so many Sheep gone astray, and must certainly be lost for ever, if thou, O Lord, dost not stop them in their evil Ways, and recall them to their Duty.

Shew this Mercy therefore to them, we beseech thee, and have Compassion on all in Sin. Let not thy own Creatures any longer live on in Rebellion against thee,
nor

Conversion of St. Paul, Jan. 28. 375

nor those, who have been Redeem'd, any more trample on the Blood of the Lamb. Renew thy Mercies in them, and let not their Iniquity be a Check to thy Goodness, since 'tis the Glory of Mercy to do good to the Unworthy.

Hear our Prayers, O most Loving and Bountiful Lord, and let not so many Wretches perish in their Sin: Behold, after so many Ages, we glorify thee for thy Mercy to this Apostle: Let other Sinners partake of the same, that thy Name may be glorify'd by all Generations.

Let us pray.

O GOD, who hast instructed the whole World by the Preaching of Blessed Paul, thy Apostle, grant, we beseech thee, that we who this Day Celebrate his Conversion, may by his Example come to the Possession of thee. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

*The Purification of the Blessed Virgin,
Feb. 2.*

Luke ii. 22, 32.

THis being the Day when the Blessed Virgin, as was prescrib'd by the Law of Moses,

376 *The Purification of the*

Moses, went to the Temple to be purified, after her Delivery, and to present her Son Jesus to our Lord; let us go likewise with them to the Temple, and there offer our Prayers, as we are directed by the Ceremony of this Day.

Let us pray.

WE give thee Praise, O Eternal God, for the Subject of this Day's Devotion; for the great Humility in thy Son Jesus, and in his Virgin-mother, in complying with a Ceremony of the Law, to which they were nothing oblig'd; such a Ceremony, as seem'd to dishonour the Divinity of the Son, and the Privilege of the Mother, in the Sanctity of her Conceiving and being Deliver'd.

This, O God, was a great Condescension, that thy Eternal Son, with the Blessed Virgin, should appear in the Rank of Sinners; and voluntarily submit to such a Law, which, in the Eye of the World, puts them upon the Level with the rest of Mankind, with all that are Born of the Seed of *Adam*.

It was another Humiliation, that thy Only Son, being offer'd according to the Law, should be redeem'd with a Pair of Turtles, or two Young Pigeons, being set, like other Poor Children, at so mean a Rate. But all this is the Effect of thy Mercy to us, for which Eternal Thanks are due to thy Name.

It

It was to give us an Example, and teach us the Ways grateful to thee, and most effectual for our Salvation. For this End thou wast pleas'd that thy Increated Word, God the Son, Infinite in Holiness, should appear under the Character of a Sinner, being reputed as the meanest of those, who are Born of Women; and that his Mother, tho' *Full of Grace*, should take Part in the same Humiliation.

O God! How ought we to bow down and adore this Infinite Mercy! And how ought the Pride of us sinful Worms to be confounded at the Sight of Heaven, and all Holiness, thus humbled before us.

O Blessed Lord, we acknowledge thy Mercy, and our Misery, and now, under the Confusion of our intolerable Pride, we beseech thee to have Compassion on us, and deliver us from this Monster, which thrives so prodigiously amidst Dirt and Filth.

Give us a true Sense, we beseech thee, of this unhappy Evil, and being by Profession Disciples of Christ our Redeemer, grant us an Abhorrence of that, against which he made such early War, and the Interest of which we cannot now espouse, but by being his Enemies. For what can we now have to do with Pride, who are the Followers of a God humbled for our Salvation?

O Bles-

O Blessed Jesus, who hast done so much for us, and especially to teach us this Lesson, that in Pride is our Ruin, and that Humility is the Character, which most Effectually recommends us to the Mercy of our God ; extend this Mercy to us, and give us a docil Heart, such a Heart, as will allow no Favour to what thou hast forbidden, nor pretend to find Rest out of thy Law.

Grant we may, with a jealous Eye, observe all the Motions of Pride, and with Resolution stand against whatever of these we can discover in us. Grant we may weaken it by studied Humiliations, and never depart from thy Ways, upon the apprehension of the World's having a meaner Opinion of us.

Teach us to fear all those Methods, which the World recommends in favour of Pride ; as likewise which Pride recommends in favour of the World ; because this is a Confederacy against the Spirit of the Gospel, and we cannot be a Party with it, but by forgetting to whom we belong.

But for all those Ways, which are in the Practice of Charity, of Self-denial, of Poverty of Spirit, of Penance, of a Crucified Life ; these, O Jesus, may we be zealous to follow, because they are the Ways, which thou hast taught us : And however this Practice may be often attended with our own
Abjection,

Abjection, with doing what seems beneath us, with what Pride disapproves, and what the World may censure and laugh at, yet, O Blessed Redeemer, let not this be our Discouragement, let not this put us out of the way, but give us a Spirit to go on there more steadily, where we observe our own Humiliation; because it is here we have thee for our Guide; and as, by walking in other Ways, we shall find Self-love and the World; so by going on in these we shall have the greater Assurance of finding thee. And what is all our Profession, what is all our Religion, but for this! Grant therefore, O Jesus, on this Day of thy own Humiliation, and of this Blessed Virgin's, we may learn this important Lesson; learn to be humble, learn to walk in all the Ways of an humble Spirit. *Amen.*

Jesus being this Day presented to our Lord in the Temple, let us this Day make an Offering of ourselves to God, and beg that being consecrated to him, we may be his for ever.

O Eternal God, Creator of the World, Sovereign Lord of all Things, behold, with the Divine Victim offer'd to thee, this Day in the Temple, we offer ourselves, our Souls, our Bodies, our Hearts, our Senses, with all whatever belongs to us. Accept, we beseech thee, the Offering we make; take it into thy Protection, and confirm it to thee by thy particular Grace.

We

380 *The Purification of the*

We acknowledge, O God, we have been Consecrated to thee by the Blood of our Redeemer; this is done in our Baptism, when our Hearts are Anointed and Consecrated by the Holy Spirit. And most unhappy are we, if what is thus Consecrated to thee, our God, we give to Idols, and Sacrilegiously prostitute to the Service of the Devil.

Wherefore, O God, sensible of thy undoubted Right in us, and of the Danger we are in, from our own Corruption, of being unjust, we this Day renew the Memory of our Consecration, by a new Oblation of ourselves to thee; and most earnestly implore thy Help for securing thy own Right in us, so that neither any Corruption within nor Charm without, may be able to draw us from the Duty we owe to thee.

For this End, we beseech thee, O Blessed Redeemer (who wast this Day declar'd the Light of the Gentiles) to become a Light to us, to direct us in all our Ways; we must acknowledge our best discerning Faculties to be very weak of themselves, and so unhappily subject to be impos'd on, that we cannot with any Confidence depend upon them, without Danger of being led out of the Way.

Hence we can have no Security but under the Conduct of a safe and saving Guide. And who can be this Guide to us, but

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but thou, O Jesus, who being the Wisdom of the Father, art not subject to Error; and being the Light of the World, as well as the Redeemer, hast no Darkness to make thy Conduct hazardous?

Come therefore, O Blessed Jesus, be a Light to us, to direct our uncertain Steps; Undertake to Guide us thro' all the difficult and dangerous Ways of this our Pilgrimage, and secure us against all the false Lights, which on every side are ready to lead us into Snares.

Undertake this Mercy for us, we beseech thee; for 'tis thus only we can hope to be Just, in securing the Offering, which now we have made to thee. O Jesus, hear us, and this Day shew thyself a Saviour to us. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

Almighty and Everlasting God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that as thy Only Son was this Day Presented in the Temple in the Substance of our Flesh, so we likewise, thro' the Effect of thy Grace, may be Presented to thee with Clean Hearts. Thro' the same Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

After

After taking a Candle.

*C*andles being Bless'd and Distributed on this Day, in Memory of Christ's being acknowledg'd and declar'd the Light of the Gentiles; in taking the Candle we are to confess Christ to be the True Light of the World, and beg that he will mercifully please to be a Light to us, both living and dying.

O Blessed God, it was the Effect of thy Grace in old *Simeon*, that he did this Day take the Infant Jesus in his Arms, and confess him to be the Saviour of the World, and Light of the Gentiles: Behold, with the same Faith, which is likewise thy Gift, I bow down and adore Christ my Redeemer, I acknowledge him to be thy Only Begotten Son, to be God, Equal and Consubstantial with thee from all Eternity.

I confess him to be the Redeemer of the World, and that having taken Flesh of the Virgin *Mary*, he is both God and Man in the same Person. I confess him to be the One Mediator, thro' whom alone we can hope for Salvation; and that for his Infinite Mercy and Love to Man, I am bound to adore, serve and love him for ever.

But

But how can I do this, who am nothing but Weakness, Misery and Sin? Wherefore, O Jesus, behold I turn to thee, and implore thy Goodness in behalf of this poor, unhappy Sinner. Undertake my Protection, I beseech thee, and teach me thy Holy Will.

I have but this one Thing above all others to do, which is to seek my God, and to obtain in him Everlasting Rest. But how unhappy am I, who have the World, with its various Cheats, every Day endeavouring to draw me out of the Way, who have my Friends leading me into many Snares; and, which is worse, who have so many Passions to corrupt my Reason, that with plausible Arguments I transgress my greatest Duties, and sit down in a false Peace, while I am Sacrificing to *Baal* or *Mammon*, and posting on in such Ways, which 'tis to be fear'd end in Destruction!

These being my unhappy Circumstances, into which I have been brought by Sin, I can see nothing but Despair in myself, and my only Salvation is in thee, O Jesus; help me therefore, O most Loving Redeemer, and be a Guide to my uncertain steps. Be thou my Light, and direct me in all my Ways. Discover to me the Fal-
lacy of the World, that I may not be de-
ceiv'd by it; the deceitful Pretexts of my
own Corruption, that I may not be misled
by

384 *After taking a Candle.*

by it; shew me all the Snares which lie before me, that I may not be surpriz'd in them thro' my own Folly, Rashness or Indiscretion.

I confess, O God, 'tis by these I have been too often deceiv'd, and by following such Advisers have provok'd against me thy frequent Displeasure; but I sincerely now desire it may be so no more; and therefore from this Moment I beg thee, O Jesus, to be the Guide of my whole Life, and to keep me steady under thy Conduct, amidst all the Dangers of being led out of the Way.

Remember, I beseech thee, my great Weakness; and since one Merciful Design of thy Incarnation was to enlighten every Man that comes into the World, fail not to perform this Charity in me; for behold I am Blind, and subject to false Steps, and there's no Remedy of my Unhappiness but through thee.

Hear me, O Blessed Jesus, and let thy Mercy appear in the Relief of my Misery. I offer myself this Day to thy Direction, and 'tis my Hearty Desire, from this Moment, never to follow any other Motion, but what thou approvest. How happy a Day would this be to me, were this my Desire to be accomplish'd! Let thy Light go before me, O Jesus, and give me such a Sincere and Docil Heart, as ever to follow

when

St. George, April 23. 385

where thou directest. O Jesus, enlighten my Eyes, and let me no more walk in Darkness.

St. George, April 23.

THIS being the Day of that Holy Martyr, whom our Pious Ancestors have made Choice of for the Patron of our Nation; let us this Day make our Addresses to Almighty God, in behalf of our Country, that he would please to pour forth his Blessings upon it, and by his Holy Grace, make us a chosen People.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast been pleas'd to magnify thy Name amongst our Primitive Ancestors, and to distinguish them by the particular Marks of their Piety; revive the same Mercy to us, we beseech thee, that now in our Days, we may seek thee with all our Hearts, and zealously labour to copy out the Examples, our Forefathers have left us.

For this End, we most humbly implore thy Goodness, to have Compassion on this our Country, and by thy powerful Grace

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to

to remove from it, whatever is provoking or displeasing to thee.

We confess, O God, our Disorders are many, and so infinitely do Evils abound amongst us, that we have Reason to fear the most Rigorous of thy Scourges; and if thou shouldst wholly abandon us to the Ways of our own Iniquities, we could not be surpriz'd at it, nor ask, Why hast thou done so to us?

But, O most Gracious Lord, as we confess our manifold Unworthiness, so we likewise acknowledge thy Mercies to be infinite; and therefore with a full Confidence in thy Mercy, we now make our Petitions before thy Throne, beseeching thee to have Compassion on us, and not to manifest thy Justice in forsaking us, but thy Goodness in saving us.

O God! how terrifying have thy Judgments been in many other Nations; which in Punishment of their Iniquities, have been wholly abandon'd by thee, and have had Infidelity to become the Punishment of many abus'd Christianity?

What are become of the Seven Churches of Asia, the first Seats of the Christian honour'd by the Apostles, and sanctified by the Blood of Martyrs? There was thy Name, O God, formerly glorified by a faithful People and holy Pastors. What has since been the Effect of thy Wrath,

vice neglected, and Corruption growing in among them?

Thou hadst in thy Justice forsaken them, and left them to be overthrown by their own Vices, or by their Enemies. Thou hast quite withdrawn thyself from them; so that for these many Ages, some of them are become a Heap of Stones; others have scarce a Remembrance in their own Ruins; and what remains in others, is only the Mark of thy Wrath against them, in their ancient Churches, turn'd to the Service of *Mahomet*.

How terrifying, O God, are thy Judgments upon Sinners! But have Mercy upon us, we beseech thee, and let not our Names also be upon the Register of Generations to come, as new Instances of thy Justice.

What again are become of the numerous Churches of *Africa*, in which flourish'd so many learned and holy Bishops; in which were assembled so many Councils; in which so many glorious Martyrs gave their Life for Christ, and a pious People shew'd their Zeal for Truth?

All these are, many Ages since, quite overthrown, and Christianity is so entirely rooted out, that in all those vast Countries that is scarce a Christian to be found. In this manner has Sin provok'd thy Wrath, O God, and drawn down thy

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Judgments upon that unhappy People, to the entire Desolation of all Religion; so that they, who would not be good Christians, in the Profession of the Gospel, are now in their Generation under the Turkish Yoke, Mahometans or Heathens.

How terrifying, O God, are thy Judgments upon Sinners! But have Mercy on us, we beseech thee, and let not our Names also be upon the Register of Generations to come, as new Instances of thy Justice.

Many other Nations and People there are, who being call'd to the Christian Name, have abus'd this Mercy, and by their provoking Sins, have turn'd away all Mercy from them, to the utter Ruin of the Generations after them.

But, O God, we beseech thee to have Mercy on this our Nation and People, and let not us also be an Instance of this thy Justice.

Look upon us with Compassion, and by the Power of thy Grace heal all our Wounds.

Open the Hearts of all those, whose Judgments are corrupted with Error, and by thy Heavenly Light, lead them into thy saving Truths.

Give a Check to that Liberty, which is in favour of Atheism and Irreligion, and convince all those of their base Ingratitude,

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gratitude, who employ their Wits in undermining Christianity.

Heal our manifold Divisions, and let nothing spread, which is not agreeable to thy Sacred Word, and to what thy Apostles taught.

Take away all sinful Customs, and reform those many Vices, by which we have hitherto, for so many Years, been treasuring up Anger against ourselves.

Root out all the spreading Evils of Injustice and Fraud, of Gluttony and Drunkenness, of Sensuality and Pride, of Covetousness and Prodigality, and all manner of Intemperance, Hypocrisy and Excess.

Take away all Uncharitableness, that nothing may be done out of Malice, Hatred, Envy or Revenge. Let not favouring an Interest or Party be any more the Rule; but may Justice, Charity, and Unbiaſs'd Reason prescribe Measures to all that is done. May there be no more biting and devouring one another; but may all be united in the Spirit of Love.

Take away from the Hearts of this People that worldly Spirit, which fixes Souls to the Earth; and communicate to them the Spirit of thy only Son, and of his Holy Gospel, which may turn them towards Heaven, and oblige them to be zealous in working out their Salvation.

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390 *St. George, April 23.*

Quicken in them the Life of the Spirit, more than of the World, that they may labour to conform themselves to the Life of Jesus Christ; that they may walk in his Ways, observe his Commands, and be afraid of all that which can render them displeasing to thee.

Perfect them, O God, I beseech thee, in all Good, and make them a chosen People; and thus, O Lord, deliver us from thy Judgments, and prepare us for everlasting Blessings.

Let us pray.

O God, who, by the Merits and Intercession of thy Holy Martyr *St. George*, dost comfort thy People: Mercifully grant, that we, who by him Petition for thy Blessings, may by thy Grace obtain what we ask. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On every Day of this Octave.

TO thy Mercy, O God, we commend this Nation, most humbly beseeching thee to have Compassion on it, and by thy powerful Grace to deliver it from all Evils both Temporal and Spiritual. Deliver it, O God, from all those evil Ways, by which it transgresses thy Com-

mand

mandments, by which infinite Souls are led to Destruction, and thy Holy Law brought into Contempt.

O God! 'tis an afflicting Sight, to see an universal Corruption, where thy Name is profess'd. But we appeal to thy Goodness, O Blessed Lord, for the Remedy of this Unhappiness, and most humbly beg, thy Grace may remove whatever is displeasing to thee.

Undertake, we beseech thee, this Cure, and mercifully heal all our Distempers, both publick and private. Inspire those in Power with a Holy Zeal for thy Law, that by good Example and Favour they may encourage all that is good, and by their Authority oppose all the common Practices of Vice, Prophaneness and Injustice.

Shew Mercy to all those, whose Quality sets them above others, that remembering their Rank, they may do nothing unworthy of it; that esteeming Vice to be mean, base and dishonourable, they may be watchful against such Blemishes; and pretending to Honour, may be careful, not to become, by Wickedness, the Disgrace of their Families.

Shew Mercy to all others in their several Degrees, and give them a true Sense of all their sinful Ways, by which they offend thee. Strike them with a Fear of thy An-

ger, and make them dread the Unhappiness of their own Evils. Soften their Hearts, and give them a sincere Desire and firm Resolution of reforming their Lives; and may thy Grace carry them on, to the Accomplishment of what they propose.

Shew Mercy to all, and let this Mercy, O God, appear in the Removal of all those Scandals, which are every Day filling up the Measure of our Sins.

Awaken all Drunkards, O God, all that are subject to Intemperance and Excess. Make them sensible of their Unhappiness, of the terrifying Account they are to give of their own and others Sins, and that they have no Hopes, unless they Change their Lives. *R. Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, and shew this Mercy to these Sinners.*

Awaken all those unhappy ones, O God, who are govern'd by a Carnal Spirit, who are led along by Sensuality and Uncleaness. Make these sensible of their Unhappiness, of the terrifying Account they are to give of their own and others Sins, and that they have no Hopes, unless they Change their Lives. *R. Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, and shew this Mercy to these Sinners.*

Awaken all those, O God, who give themselves up to a Life of Idleness, Vanity, and courting their own Inclinations, who are daily contriving their present Satisfac-

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tions, but are scarce in earnest in any thing, that belongs to Eternity: Make these sensible of their Unhappiness, of the terrifying Account they are to give of their own and others Sins, and that they have no Hopes, unless they Change their Lives. R. *Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, and shew this Mercy to these Sinners.*

Awaken all those, who live in any known Sin, who oppress or defraud their Neighbour, who give Scandal, or lead others into Sin; who have cast off all Discipline, and follow Extravagance, who by Neglect or sinful Liberties, are bringing Ruin on their Families: Make all these, O God, sensible of their Unhappiness, of the terrifying Account they are to give of their own and others Sins, and that they have no Hopes, unless they Change their Lives. R. *Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, and shew this Mercy to these Sinners.*

Awaken all others, O God, who thro' Perverseness of Judgment, or Corruption of Heart, go on in Ways contrary to thy Law, and to the Gospel they profess; in whatever Way they offend thee, make them sensible of their Unhappiness, of the terrifying Account they are to give of their own and others Sins, and that they have no Hopes, unless they Change their Lives. R. *Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, and shew this Mercy to these Sinners.*

Hear us, O God, in these our Petitions, and mercifully afford Remedy to our Evils; for we confess ourselves an unhappy People, running on in all that is provoking, and growing bold and fearless in our Iniquities. Scandalous Disorders abound among us, Piety and Christian Discipline is almost lost, and the general Emulation seems to be, who shall go farthest from the Ways and Spirit of the Gospel. In this all Conditions and Ranks of People join; so that tho' there be disagreeing Professions of Religion, all pretending and fighting for the Truth of the Gospel; yet most of them seem to agree, in forsaking the Ways of the Gospel, and leaving that Rule, which they all pretend to follow.

Wherefore, O God, we beseech thee to turn thy Eyes of Compassion upon us, and by thy Grace and Light so change our Hearts, that we may all turn to thee our Lord, and serve thee in Holiness and Justice all our Lives: That we may be converted from all our Iniquities, and become a faithful and holy People in thy Sight.

This is the Petition we make to thee, O God, this Day; shew Favour to us, and tho' we are unworthy, yet on this Solemnity, for the Sake of this Holy Martyr, have Compassion on us. We have chosen him for our Patron, and desire his Charity will plead for us; hear him, O God, and

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St. Mark the Evangelist, &c. 395

the Prayers of all the Saints, who have been translated from this our Island, to that Place of Rest: All these must be desirous of their Country's Good, and we cannot fail of their Prayers. Hear them, O God, we beseech thee, and while the Church both Triumphant and Militant bows down before thee, and presents the same Petition, be favourable to us, and through the Merits of thy only Son, grant our Request.

Let us pray.

O God, who, by the Merits and Intercession of thy Holy Martyr *St. George*, dost comfort thy People: Mercifully grant, that we, who by him Petition for thy Blessings, may, by thy Grace, obtain what we ask. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

St. Mark the Evangelist, April 25.

This being the Day appointed by St. Gregory the Great, for Abstinence, Prayer and Humiliation, in Acknowledgment of the Divine Mercy, in putting a Stop to the Mortality, which, in Rome, had carried away many Thousands by sudden Death! Let us
join

396 *St. Mark the Evangelist, &c.*

join in the publick Prayers of the Church, and then add our Petition.

Let us pray.

TO thee, O God, be Praise and Thanksgiving for all thy Mercies, with which thou hast been pleas'd to favour our Brethren, thy Servants, in all Ages of the Church; in accepting their Humiliations, hearing their Cries, compassionating their Miseries, and delivering them from the Scourge, that afflicted them.

In these Mercies, O God, thou hast shew'd thyself, their Father, Protector and Helper, and in their Relief hast taught us, how infinite thy Goodness is, and in whom we ought to trust.

Hence, O God, well knowing, how much Reason we have to dread thy Anger, and to apprehend the Severity of thy Scourge, for the Punishment of our Sins, we now appeal to thy Goodness, most humbly beseeching thee, to let thy Mercy take place, and prevent all those Judgments, which most justly are due to our Iniquities.

And in particular, O God, we at present Petition thy Goodness, to be deliver'd from all kind of Plagues and pestilential Distempers, which being the Instruments

of thy Justice, have been often the Chastisement of Sin.

From these, O most Gracious Lord, we beseech thee to deliver thy Servants; for tho' we have so often abus'd that Life and Being, which thou hast given us, making them a Sacrifice to Vanity and Sin, and for this deserve to have them taken from us; yet, O most Merciful Father, we beseech thee to have Compassion on us, and spare us.

Spare us, O Lord, and graciously deliver us from what we have always Reason to fear; let not thy Creatures be arm'd against us, nor stretch forth thy Arm against such poor Worms as we are. For tho' we are bold in Sin, and often go on so rashly, as if there were no Power over us, which we had Reason to fear: Yet, behold, O God, we now humble ourselves before thee; we confess our own Nothing, and thy Almighty Power; we confess, that we are in thy Hands, and there is no Need of more than thy Word, to sweep away Millions of us, like Dust of the Earth; all Creatures are at thy Beck to join in our Destruction; and if thou commandest, 'tis not in the Power of Art, or Riches, or Learning, or the Strength of the whole World to secure one Moment of our Lives.

Thus,

398 *St. Mark the Evangelist, &c.*

Thus, O most Sovereign Lord, we acknowledge thee to be our God, and our selves to be thy Creatures; and bowing down with a profound Humility, we implore thy Protection against all Dangers; we beseech thee to preserve the Being thou hast given us, and by the Continuance of thy Blessings, to oblige us to be more faithful to thee. Let thy Grace be an Addition to our Days, and whatever time we have yet to live, let it become a new Life to us, so, as forsaking all our evil Ways, to live to thee, our God, and prepare to live with thee for ever. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who in our Affliction, confide in thy Goodness, may be secured under thy Protection, against all Adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

SS. Philip and Jacob, May 1.

THIS being the Feast of St. Philip and St. James, the Brother of our Lord, both Apostles, who having been call'd by Christ,

SS. Philip and Jacob, &c. 399

Christ, left all to follow him; and having faithfully preach'd his Gospel, confirm'd it at length with their Blood: Let us accordingly direct our Prayers.

Let us pray.

O God, by whose Favour, we celebrate the Memory of these Apostles; grant, that, as we admire the Example they have given us; so, by thy Grace, we may be zealous in following it, and by their Steps, labour to come to the same Inheritance of Bliss, which they enjoy.

Grant, we may learn the first Lesson, they have set us. We see them, upon thy Call, O Jesus, leaving all to follow thee; in this we see the Power of thy Grace strongly working in them, overcoming Nature, with all its usual Fears and Apprehensions, and despising the Difficulties pretended by Self-love. All yields, where thy Grace commands, and no Exceptions are made, where a Divine Power has subjected the Creature to God.

O Merciful Father, Wonderful was thy Grace in these thy Servants, to work in them such a perfect Subjection to thy Will; so as no more to hearken to the Suggestions of Nature, or the Invitations of the World; but to be wholly attentive to thy Call, and solicitous for this one Thing alone, of doing thy Holy Will.

O God,

O God, this was a wonderful Change in them, from so much Corruption, Inconstancy and Weakness of Nature, to so much Firmness of Grace; 'tis what we cannot but admire, and are bound to give Thanks to thee, the Author of all good Gifts.

But, O God, while we admire thy Bounty in others, vouchsafe to have Mercy on us also, thy Servants, and communicate to us such a Proportion of the same Divine Gift, that we may be enabled by it to imitate what we honour, and begin to discover in ourselves the comfortable Signs of being thy true Disciples.

This Blessing of thy Holy Grace we very much want, because of the many and great Difficulties, we find, in following, where thou art pleas'd to call us: For we cannot attempt to do Good, but presently we find something either to interrupt, or hinder, or corrupt whatever we undertake.

O God! How very miserable are we in this? For how many Clogs do we find upon our Souls from our own Corruption! We no sooner begin to turn our Hearts towards thee, but immediately we have our own *Desires* to pull us back, or our *Fears* to disquiet us, or our *Imagination* to carry us another Way, or our *Affections* to blind us, or our *Sollicitude* to perplex us, or

Projects



Projects to divert us, or *Oppression* to darken us. So that whenever thou begin'st to call, tho' we have a Mind to follow, yet still, O God, are we ever stopt, or at least hinder'd, if not, quite put out of the Way.

Thus miserable, O God, are we, and so much in want of thy Grace; there being none of these Hindrances, but what plainly shew us, how far we are from being true Disciples, and how very much we have yet to leave for thee. These shew us, how much we have of ourselves, and of the World, yet reigning in us.

Help us therefore, we beseech thee; help us in overcoming all Difficulties; that making it our Profession to follow thee, we may not be led by another Spirit; that neither Self-love nor the World may any more command our Hearts; but that learning to despise all their Demands, we may be subject to none, but thy Holy Will, O God.

Thou hast manifested, O Ever-blessed Redeemer, the powerful working of thy Grace in these Apostles, who at once renounc'd all to follow thee; 'tis such Grace we want, for disengaging our Hearts, and being at Liberty for becoming thy true Disciples. For now as it is, we are ever halting between Two: We call thee Master and Lord, and do many Things, in
Acknow-

Acknowledgment both of thy Power, and of our Duty; and yet, upon examining our Lives, we plainly see, there's another Power governing in us. Our natural Inclinations, and Passions, command a great Part of our Lives; Pride has a great Share in them; we pay Obedience to our own Will and Humour; Company and the World, and worldly Considerations, have the deciding Vote in most of our Resolutions: Thus we go on every Day, parceling out our Lives between our own Variety of Corruptions, and the World; and yet still under the Character and Name of being thy Disciples.

O Jesus, we plainly see and confess, this cannot be right; this can be no better than Pretence and Mockery, and can never come to the Promises made to those, that follow thee; have Mercy therefore on us, we beseech thee, and now while thou giv'st us a Sense of our ill Ways, give us likewise Grace to mend them; give us a better Spirit, even thy Spirit, O Jesus; for 'tis now evident to us, as long as we live by any other Spirit, we cannot be thy Disciples.

O Blessed Redeemer, look now upon us, thy Petitioners, humbling ourselves before thee. We see our Misery, and when we see likewise so much Weakness in ourselves, that we can expect no Remedy, but from thee!

thy Merciful Hand. Have Mercy therefore on us, we beseech thee, and help us in this essential Part of our Profession.

May we every Day remember, that to be thy Disciple, is to follow thee; 'tis to consider in every Thing, and on all Occasions, what is thy Holy Will; and to let this have the Determination of our Counsels, be the Measure of our Actions, and the Government of our Lives.

'Tis to be on the Guard, in examining all inward and outward Suggestions, that are made to us, and with Resolution to stand against all those, which we discern, not to be of God. 'Tis to be ever ready to contradict Inclination and Nature, and Interest, and Friends, and Company and the World, and to bear all the Trouble and Inconveniencies in so doing, whenever they perswade to any Thing that is not according to God.

O Jesus! And is this to be thy Disciple! How miserable and wretched a Creature then am I, who have been so many Years under the Character of thy Disciple, and yet have taken so very little Care to follow thee! Nay, I must confess my Wickedness against myself: How much more have I been led along by my own Inclination, and when by thy Holy Will? How much more have I been directed by my own Passions but from Humour, than by thee my God?

How

404 SS. Philip and Jacob, &c.

How much more have I consulted Vanity, and Sloth, and Interest, and other worldly Respects, than thy Gospel, O Jesus! And how then have I been thy Disciple! I have been so in Name; but how very little more, is known to thee, whom I have more forsaken than follow'd.

But pardon me, Dear Jesus, I beseech thee; pardon me the many times I have so unworthily departed from thee, and forgive me my Iniquities. And now, on this Day of thy Apostles, call upon my Soul, as thou didst upon them, and command me to follow thee. Let thy Command break all my Chains, and set me at true Liberty: Let it lay my Soul under this perpetual Conviction, That a Disciple of Christ ought ever to be led by Christ, and that 'tis making a Mock of my Profession, to walk in any other Way, besides that, which he approves.

O Blessed Redeemer, teach me thus to do thy Will.

And may I never follow any other Guide.

Let us pray.

O God, who bringest Comfort to thy Servants, in the Yearly Solemnity of thy Apostles *Philip* and *James*: Grant, we beseech thee, that as we rejoice in their Merits,

Invention of the H. Cross, May 3. 405

Merits, so we may be instructed by their Example. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

Invention of the Holy Cross, May 3.

THis Festival is a Memorial of that Day, when St. Helen going to Jerusalem, miraculously found the Cross, on which Christ had suffer'd, after it had lain buried till that time, under Ground, and a Statue of Venus, had been set up on Mount Calvary by the Heathens in the Place of it, for effacing the Memory of his Sacred Passion. Hence,

Let us pray.

O God, who, this Day, renewest in the Minds of the Faithful, the Memory of Christ's Sacred Passion, by the miraculous Discovery of that Cross, on which he suffer'd; mercifully grant, that we, who rejoice in this Solemnity, may find in our souls the comfortable Effects of that Blood, which was shed on the Cross for our Redemption. Grant, That we may be thus happy, behold, O God, we here, on this Day of the Cross, bow

406 *Invention of the H. Cross,*

bow down, and with Gratitude acknowledge thy infinite Mercy, in the Redemption, that was wrought for us on the Cross. We prostrate and adore thee, for that, in Compassion to such wretched and ungrateful Sinners, banish'd from Heaven, and of ourselves incapable of recovering thy Favour, thou wast pleas'd to send thy only Son to become our Sacrifice, and by his Sacred Blood, to cancel the Hand-writing, that was against us.

Blessed, O Eternal God, be thy Holy Name, for this thy unspeakable Goodness to sinful Man. May the Angels praise thee, may the Cherubins magnify thee, may all the Blessed Choirs above sing forth the Glory of thy Mercy, and by grateful Allelujahs supply that Thanksgiving, which is due from us.

And to thee, O Jesus, O Saviour of Mankind, be given everlasting Praise, for undertaking the difficult Work of our Salvation; for voluntarily submitting thyself to all that is humbling; to Poverty and Contempt, to publick Reproach and false Accusations, to the malicious Cruelty of thy Enemies, and to the disgraceful Death on the Cross.

Thus, O Jesus, wast thou pleas'd to bear our Iniquities, to heal us by thy Wounds, and to give thy Life, so to rescue us from the Bonds of Eternal Death.

O Blessed

May 3.

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O Blessed Redeemer! who can sufficiently admire the Wonders of thy Goodness! Who shall be able to make a Return to thee, for thy Mercies to us!

Blessed be thy Holy Name, O most Loving Jesus, for this thy unspeakable Goodness to sinful Man. May the Angels praise Thee; may the Cherubins magnify Thee; may all the Blessed Choirs above sing forth the Glory of thy Mercy, and by grateful Allelujahs supply that Thanksgiving, which is due from us.

But for us, what can we do, but with Confusion condemn our own Hardness, Stupidity and Blindness; who having such infinite Mercy to awaken us; such surprizing Goodness to excite us, are yet so very little sensible of all thou hast done, that our Study is much more to please ourselves, than to do thy Holy Will; and our general Method is still to be led along by Infirmity, Corruption and Sin, as if thy Commands were nothing to us, and we had no Interest in all thou hast done for us!

O Jesus! we confess, nothing more evidently shews us our own Misery, than this Hardness under thy Mercies; nothing can more convince us of the great Necessity we have, of appealing to thy Sacred Passion, for the Remedy of this our Unhappiness.

Wherefore,

408 *Invention of the H. Cross,*

Wherefore, O Blessed Redeemer, behold, we humble ourselves before thee, and with all the Earnestness of our Souls, beseech thee to have Mercy on us. We confess our unhappy State, through our manifold Iniquities, which have been multiplied above the Hairs of our Head; and especially for our great Ingratitude towards thee, our Redeemer, who hast spared neither thy Labour, nor Liberty, nor Life for our Salvation.

Thou hast given thyself wholly for us; and our Iniquities speak, how unmindful we have liv'd of thee. This Solemnity of the Cross calls both to our Remembrance; both thy infinite Mercies, and our infinite Misery. And what does the sacrilegious Prophaneness of the Heathens shew us, but too much of ourselves? They were Enemies to thy Cross, and set up their Idols in its Place. And how much less have we done? Nay, is it not much more detestable, what we have done, who confessing thee to be our Redeemer, have let our Pride, our Luxury, our Self-love set up their Idols; and, O God! how much have we follow'd them, instead of the Doctrine of the Cross! The Cross has been hidden from our Eyes; it has been buried to us under Earth and Corruption, and our Lives have not been govern'd by it.

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This, O Jesus, has been our Misery, and now sensible of our Guilt, we humbly acknowledge it before thee, and appeal to the Merits of thy Sacred Passion for our Help, because there we have solid Ground of Hopes.

Have Compassion therefore on thy Servants, and since thy coming was to call Sinners to Repentance, hear us now calling upon thee; we confess the manifold Pollution of our Souls, and that we cannot be purified from our Guilt, but by thy Sacred Blood, which was shed for us; hear us therefore now calling for Mercy, and by the Fruit of thy Blood, wash us from all our Iniquities, and cleanse us from our Sins. Thou hast all Power given thee, both in Heaven and on Earth; employ this Power, we beseech thee, in our Behalf; let it be for Mercy, and not for our Condemnation.

And not only for Mercy, but grant likewise, O most Gracious Redeemer, that on this Day, on which thy Cross was found, we likewise may find the Spirit of the Cross in our Hearts, that so from this time, we may live by that Spirit, and by that shew, whose Disciples we are.

May we find the Spirit of seeking God above all Things, and glorifying him in all we do. R. *Amen.*

410 *Invention of the H. Cross, &c.*

May we find the Spirit of doing the Will of our Heavenly Father. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of not living to ourselves, but to God. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of true Submission, under all the Appointments of God. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of Humility, in yielding with Peace, under all, that is for our Humiliation. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of Patience, in being never tir'd under the Exercises, whatever Almighty God shall give us. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of embracing all that is abject and contemptible, and of living a Crucified Life. *R. Amen.*

May we find the Spirit of dying to ourselves, and to the World, and of bearing our Cross, as Christ's Disciples, to the End of our Lives. *R. Amen.*

Hear us, O Blessed Redeemer, and on this Day of the Cross, may we learn the Lessons of the Cross. May we learn to renounce all that is contrary to it, and not live as Enemies, while we profess Faith in its Mysteries. And yet, what is it to seek ourselves, and to follow the Inclinations of our own Corruption, but to live Enemies to the Cross? O Jesus, merciful to us this Day; take us out

Apparition of St. Michael, &c. 411

this evil Way, and put us into the Way of the Cross.

Let us pray.

O God, who in the wonderful Discovery of the Holy Cross, didst renew the Miracles of thy Passion: Grant, that by the Price of that Life-giving Wood, we may find Help to everlasting Life; who livest and reignest with God the Father.

Apparition of St. Michael the Archangel, May 8.

THis being a Day Memorable for the Apparition of St. Michael the Archangel on Mount Garganus, in the Fifth Century, in the Time of Pope Gelasius; hence let us direct our Prayers.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast appointed the Holy Angels, to adore before thy Throne, and likewise to be ministring Spirits, in Things belonging to Men: Mercifully
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412 *Apparition of St. Michael*

grant, that in both their Functions they may be helpful to us, and that thou mayst be glorified in all thy Creatures.

We rejoyce, O God of infinite Majesty, that thou art worthily glorified by those Heavenly Spirits; that by them thou art ador'd and serv'd, not in that poor, distracted and unbecoming manner, as we poor Sinners do, but with an Adoration becoming the Majesty of thy Glory.

In this, O God, we rejoyce, and most humbly beg, that by them may be supplied whatever is wanting in the Homage we pay; and that now thou wouldst give us leave to join in Spirit with that Heavenly Host, and in their Sacred Choir fall down and adore thee, saying with them, and in their Spirit; *Salvation to our God, who sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb. Benediction, and Glory and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Strength, to our God for ever and ever. Amen. To the King Eternal, Immortal and Invisible; to God alone, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Thus, O God of infinite Power, may we every Day adore in Union with those Spirits above, adding our poor Mite to their better Praises, and endeavouring in Spirit to make a Part in their Choir.

Thus, O God, may we do, as often as we come to Prayer: Raise up our Eyes

to them, and from their Example, learn how to bow down and adore; how to prostrate ourselves before thy Majesty; how to fix our Hearts upon thee; how to be fill'd with thy awful Presence; how to repute all Things as nothing, which are not of thee.

In this manner, O most Gracious Lord, may the Holy Angels be our Pattern. And when, O Blessed God, shall we be so happy, as to follow this Pattern! Hitherto we are dull and heavy, our Thoughts are ever roving, and our Hearts unfixt; so that Prayer to us, is little better than a Form; and 'tis much to be fear'd, that by our general Neglect, our Devotions become the Means, not of obtaining thy Favours, but of encreasing our Guilt.

But when, O Lord, when shall we be deliver'd from this unhappy State! When shall we shake off every Weight, that clogs our Soul to the Earth! When shall our Hearts enjoy that true Liberty, which belongs to thy Children, and is necessary for all, that are to love thee, and serve thee!

Hear us, O Blessed God, and grant us our Petition, that, as the Angels serve thee in Heaven, so we may become thy faithful servants, to praise thee on Earth; and thus be daily strengthen'd in Hope of being,

414 *Apparition of St. Michael, &c.*

one Day, added to the Number of that Blessed Company.

For this End, we beseech thee, O Sovereign Lord, to let thy Holy Angels minister to us, and by their Assistance, defend us from all Evil, and help us forward in the Way of Salvation.

May thy Holy Angels stand by us, and as by them the Dragon and the Apostate Angels were cast out of Heaven, so by them may we be defended from the Assaults of all evil Spirits. *R. Amen.*

May thy Holy Angels touch our Hearts, and by a Coal from the Altar purify them from all Evil, as the Seraphin purify'd the Lips of the Prophet. *R. Amen.*

May thy Holy Angels accompany us, and be our Guides in every Way, in which we are to walk, as the Angel was to *Toby*. *R. Amen.*

May thy Angels rescue us from all Dangers, both of Body and Soul, as they did *Lot* out of *Sodom*. *R. Amen.*

May they ever imprint thy Holy Law in our Hearts, as they gave the Law to *Moses*. *R. Amen.*

May thy Holy Angels comfort us under all Difficulties and Afflictions, as they did *Christ* in the Desert, and in the Garden. *R. Amen.*

Thus, O God, since thou hast given thy Angels charge of us, mercifully grant, that

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by their Assistance, we may be help'd in all that is Good, and by their Charity be directed through this Vale of Misery; till we come to be admitted into their Blessed Society, to rejoice in thee, and give thee Thanks for all the Appointments of thy Mercy, for effecting our Salvation.

Let us pray.

O God, who in a wonderful manner, hast dispos'd the Ministry of Angels and Men; mercifully grant, that our Life on Earth may be defended by them, who always minister to thee in Heaven. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.

Common for Festivals.

On a Vigil.

This being the Vigil of — appointed by the Church to be kept in Fasting and Humiliation, so to prepare our Souls for the Mercies of God in the following Festival, let us now beg Grace of the Almighty, that we may so observe this Day, that our Souls

may be prepar'd for the Favours of Heaven.

Let us pray.

O God, by whose Mercy we have Days appointed, wherein we are call'd to the Knowledge of ourselves, and by the Exercises of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, to prepare our Souls for those Helps of thy Divine Bounty which are necessary for our Salvation; grant we may so observe this present Day as to answer the End of its Institution; and that duly preparing our Souls, we may be happy in receiving those Graces, we so much want in this our unhappy Pilgrimage.

And since Fasting is one thing requir'd of us, as a proper Means for humbling Sinners, and for inclining thee to Compassion and Mercy, direct us, we beseech thee, and help us in keeping such a Fast this Day, as may be the Punishment of our Sins, and be so acceptable to thee, as to remove thy Scourges, and open the Treasures of thy Goodness upon us.

Hence, O God, we ask this Mercy of thee, that we may not deceive ourselves with Names or Ceremonies, or by following in such a Track only as Custom has made; but we beg thy Light to consider what is the Fast, which thou hast chosen, what is the Fast due to our Sins, and pro

per for engaging thy Mercy to us, and according to these Measures, O God, may we regulate the Fast of this Day.

Upon this Account we ask that Sincerity of thee, that, while we undertake to fast, we may not let Appetite, Inclination or Self-love have the Direction of what we are to Eat, or what to Drink : For these, we confess, O God, are but Ill-Counsel, and will never consider what is well-pleasing to thee, but only what is so to themselves. 'Tis by these we have been too often led into Excess and Sin, and therefore it cannot be reasonable they should be the Advisers, on Days design'd to punish their Disorders.

Rather, O Blessed God, let us begin with a Sincere Repentance of all our Sins, and with a particular Review of the many Ill-Customs, to which we are subject; and having settled this one Point, of *What is Necessary for Nature to subsist*, let us leave to Repentance to determine all the rest.

Let Repentance determine, how far Appetite ought to be denied, in punishment of its past Irregularities.

Let Repentance determine, what kind of Fast is necessary for humbling the Sinner.

Let Repentance determine, what kind of Fast is necessary for awakening the Sinner, and bringing him to a true Sense of his Iniquities

quities. Let Repentance determine, what kind of Fast may be proper for weakening the Violence of Corruption, and bringing Nature into Subjection to thy Will, O God.

Let Repentance determine, how far the Sinner ought to be punish'd by Fasting, who has so often lifted up his Head, and rebell'd against his God.

Grant, O most Gracious Lord, that by these Measures we may proceed this Day in our Fast; not regarding any Liberties, which have Custom for their Warrant, but appealing from these to the Necessities of our Soul, and seeing what these demand in Order to our eternal Good.

And let not Repentance have the Direction only of what belongs to Eating and Drinking; but grant, O God, it may prescribe, as to all the Actions of the Day.

May this consider the frequent Transgressions of our Pride, and, both for Punishing and Correcting it, allow nothing this Day, which can be in favour of it.

May it put a restraint upon our Words, and suppress all those, which Vanity, Boasting or Stubbornness suggest, and by such Silence labour to atone for the Pride of our Lips. May it consider all the other Ways of Pride, whether in our Thoughts, or Heart, or Dress, and this Day make Choice of all such humbling Methods, as are most

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proper for Chastising or Reforming our Sin.

Hence, O God, may it be our Practice, this Day, to stoop to the meanest Offices, such as we are inclin'd to think beneath us. May we make such Visits, as can have only the Encouragement of Charity, and not of Pride. May we bear Contradictions in Silence, and endeavour to rejoice in Contempts, as our Due. And in whatever way we observe, at other times, our Pride to break forth, there may it be our present Sollicitude to apply suitable Remedies.

May Repentance likewise consider our usual Impatience, and this Day keep such a Watch, as to give a general Check to it, where-ever it begins to appear. Hence, O God, may thy Grace now enable us to the true Government of our selves, that no Word of Passion or Impatience be this Day heard from our Mouths. May we keep the like Command upon our Thoughts, so as to allow these no liberty of Fretting, Vexation or Grief, but under all such Occasions may we still remember that Impatience has been hitherto our Sin, it deserves the Punishment of whatever we at present suffer; and that, if we do not thus labour to overcome it, we shall carry the Guilt of it to our Graves.

May our Repentance likewise, O God, consider the Positiveness, Perverseness and Corruption of our own Wills, and that this

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is the Root of all our Sins. Hence may it be our Task, this Day, to bring our Will into subjection, and force it to bend, by the Practice of a general Self denial. For this End, we beseech thee, O God, to help us by thy Grace. Help us in resisting all Inclinations to whatever is sinful. Help us in bearing with Silence what does not please us. Help us in not contending for our own Ways ; but in chusing rather to yield to others, in all that is Indifferent. Help us in contradicting our Wills, where-ever we observe them bent with Eagerness, and have nothing more than Humour or Fancy to plead for their Demands. Help us in withstanding all Inclinations, that are in favour of Curiosity or Sloth, or of any other Weakness, or Ill-Custom. Help us in submitting to all the Difficulties of our State, and all present Uneasiness, without Complaint. Help us in governing all our Aversions and Dislikes, and in all Occasions may we act contrary to them. Help us in undertaking and performing, this Day, such Exercises and Actions as we do not like ; and if there be any humbling Condescendence belonging to us, either in Words or Actions, help us this Day in performing it. Help us in weakening all those Affections in us, which can be suspected either of Sin or Excess, and may we do nothing in Compliance with them.

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Thus, O God, in whatever way our own Will is either Sinful, Disorderly or Violent, may we, this Day, labour to overcome it, and by frequent Self-denials so accustom it to yield, as to become easie in its Obedience, which is due to thee.

May our Repentance, besides this, consider whatever Customs we have in favour of Idleness, Intemperance, or of a Worldly, Prodigal or Undisciplin'd Life; and, this Day, prescribe such a Method, as may make us sensible of our Errors, and change the Temper of our Souls. In order to this, give us Grace, we beseech thee, O God, this Day, to separate ourselves from all that feeds these Corrupt and Ill Humours in us. Give us Grace to avoid all kind of Games, Shews, and Publick Meetings; to decline idle Company, Books and Places, that are not for Edification. And as far as Circumstances will permit, may we give so much Time to Recollection, Prayer, Reading, the Consideration of Eternity, and the Examination of the present State of our Souls, as may shew us the Horrour of Sin, and convince us, that all the Happiness of the World is Vanity and Folly, and that there is no true Comfort but in a Good Conscience, in seeking and serving thee, O God.

May our Repentance still look one Step farther, as far as our Conscience is concern'd

cern'd in our Neighbour, and endeavour to retrench all that carries with it the guilt of Sin. For this End may we now, this Day, consider, if by any Means we give Scandal, Disedifie, or Draw others into Sin ; and let the Resolutions of this *Vigil* put a Stop to all such Disorders.

May we strictly examine, if by any Injustice, Fraudulent Dealings, or by not Paying of Debts, we do Wrong to our Neighbour, and now take Measures for doing what is Just.

May we consider if there be any Contention, Breach of Charity, or Misunderstanding betwixt us and our Neighbour, and, this Day, resolve upon Means for restoring of Peace. May we contend or quarrel with no Body, this Day, nor take Exceptions at any Thing, that shall be said or done.

May we be Moderate and Mild to all, ready to afford Help and Comfort, as far as our Condition will permit ; and do nothing, that can give Affliction or Trouble to any Neighbour.

In this manner, O God, may we employ this Day, endeavouring by all Ways to overcome Sin in our selves, and to remove from us whatever we can discover in us to be displeasing to thee. May we be Zealous in all those Exercises, which can recommend us to thy Favour ; and in this

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On the Day of One Martyr. 423

Method may we prepare our Souls for the Mercies of the following Solemnity.

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the Solemn Festival, for which we are now preparing, may be to us the Encrease of Devotion, and a Help of Salvation. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

On the Day of One Martyr.

THis being the Day of S.N. who suffer'd so much for the Sake of Christ, let us give Thanks to Almighty God for the great Grace bestow'd on this his Servant ; and likewise beg a like Grace for our selves, that we may be patient in all Suffering, and be prepar'd to give our Life for Christ.

Let us pray.

WE give thee Thanks, Almighty God, for thy great Privilege of Grace bestow'd on this thy Servant, by which he was rais'd above Human Weakness, and carry'd Victorious thro' so many Trials, even so far as to despise Torments and Death itself for thy Glory. For

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For this thy Mercy to him we adore
and bless thy Holy Name, and desire that
the Example, he has shewed of Courage
and Patience, may be a Lesson to all Ge-
nerations of giving thee Praise in this Day
of his Triumphs, and of zealously following
his Steps, so to partake in his Crown.

This is the Petition at least we make on
this Day of thy Martyr in our own Behalf,
that beholding thee, O God, glorified in
his Sufferings, and him exalted by them
to a Seat of Bliss, and to attend the Lamb;
we may understand the Benefit of Suffer-
ing, and submit to it with such an humble
Patience, that thou may'st be glorified
also in our Suffering, and we exalted by
it.

Hence, O God, we beseech thee, that
whatever Occasion of Trouble happens to
us this Day, we may fall into no Passion
or Impatience, but may be careful to pre-
serve an inward Peace, and an outward
Moderation, both in our Words and Ac-
tions.

Give us Grace and Strength to stand
Firm under all Provocation, so as to be
watchful against all Inclinations to Fret-
ting, Peevishness, Grief, Vexation, or
other Disturbance; and grant us that true
Command of ourselves, that whatever is to
be reprov'd, there may however nothing
appear

On the Day of One Martyr. 425

appear in us contrary to the Meekness of the Christian Spirit.

In all such Occasions grant we may remember what we honour this Day; that we honour the Memory of a Martyr; of one who had not ordinary Trials, who suffer'd all Extremities, who stood Constant under them, who bless'd God, and rejoiced in his Suffering; who had his Soul Supported with Hope, and found God the Rewarder of his Sufferings, in the welcome Repentance of an Everlasting Crown.

This being the Suffering, and this the Reward we honour in this Martyr, may this, O God, be a Reproach to us in all Inclinations to Impatience. For what has Impatience to do in those, who honour the Patience of such as have suffer'd to Death? What has Impatience to do in those, who honour Patience as the certain Way to a Crown.

O God, we confess it ought to have nothing to do in them; and therefore, while we Celebrate the Festival of Martyrs, we cannot but lament our own Weakness and Impatience, who are so easily disturb'd, who so often break forth into a Passion, who upon trifling Occasions lose our inward Peace; who are so very soon dejected and left without Courage; who cannot bear a Contradiction or Reproof, or even what

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what thwarts our Humour, without danger of a Sorm; who upon ordinary Disappointments are presently in Despair.

O God, so much we find of this in ourselves breaking forth upon all Occasions, that we cannot but complain of our Unhappiness before thee, and most humbly beseech thee to have Compassion on us.

Have Compassion therefore on us, O God, and by thy Grace heal this Infirmitie in us. By thy Grace give us such a Firmness of Mind, that we may not be so easily mov'd, as hitherto we have too often been: That we may not be surpriz'd into Passion, nor let Vexation steal upon us.

Give us the true Government of our Mind and Thoughts, and likewise of our Words, that by discreet Management we may learn to preserve a Calm in our own Breast, and Peace with every Neighbour.

And whenever Nature begins to betray its Weakness, and to be seiz'd with Trouble, then, O God, remember us, we beseech thee, under our Weakness, and put us in Mind of seeking Help from thee.

Then, O God, support us, if it be thy Blessed Will; defend us from all the Violence, and Blindness of Passion.

Then

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Then, O God, may we be fearful of ourselves, and run to thee for shelter.

Then may we turn our Eyes upon the Martyrs, and see how inconsiderable is the Occasion of our Complaints, if compar'd to what they suffer'd.

Then may we observe the Constancy and Courage, with which they bore the Weight of the severest Trials.

Then may we remember what they gain'd by their Suffering, and that Heaven was purchas'd by their Patience.

Then may we remember that in every Occasion of Suffering, thou, O God, offer'st us an Opportunity of following the Martyrs; and that in all Troubles thou standest ready to Crown our Patience.

Shew favour to us, O God, in these Circumstances, and teach us to make a right use of all our Suffering; and let us no more be so Unhappy, as there to lose thee, where others have gain'd thee.

It was in their Suffering the Martyrs found thee; they found thee their Comfort and Support, and by their Patience in Tribulation were brought to the Possession of thee. By the same Method we may have Part in their happy Lot; if we follow their Example, we cannot fail of their Reward.

But then, O God, if we take not this Rule; if in our Troubles we are Impatient

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tient and Passionate ; if we lose our own Peace, and put others into Confusion ; what is this, O Blessed God, but losing thee, where others, by better Management, would have found thee, and have engag'd thy Mercy to them, in order to an Eternal Blessing ?

Thus did this Martyr, whose Festival we now celebrate ; he had the same Nature as we have, he was subject to a like Weakness and Corruption : But he had no regard to the Inclinations of Nature ; he consider'd not Suggestions of Flesh and Blood, but was wholly intent upon thy Holy Will, and Eternal Weight of Glory, which was before him : For the Sake of these, he offer'd himself to all that was tormenting ; he despis'd the Complaints of Nature, and valued not the passing Terror of a short Death, for securing to himself the Inheritance of a Life Everlasting. A Life whose Happiness he now enjoys, and shall enjoy for ever and ever in thy Presence ; while the Torments of his Death were only for a few Moments, and nothing now remains of them but their Fruit, the Eternal Possession of thee his God.

And may not we be thus happy, if with a like Patience and Hope we submit to such Troubles, as come to our Portion ? Yes, O God, thou hast promis'd it, and there

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there is nothing but our Ill-Management can be our Disappointment.

Help us therefore, O Merciful Father, and by thy Grace make us wise in this Point. It was by the Effect of thy Grace this Martyr overcame Nature, and chose to suffer all for Heaven; may the same Grace reach us also, O God, that in our Trials and Troubles we may no more be directed by Nature but by thy Heavenly Will, that in our Suffering also thou mayst be glorified, and we, in our Patience, may possess our own Souls.

Grant this, O God of Martyrs, and may we not only think it Reasonable now, but even then also when Troubles come; then may thy Grace defend us against all the Surprize of Impatience, Oppressing Passion, and Ill-reasoning; then may thy Grace keep our Eyes open, to see our only true Interest and Duty; then may thy Grace inspire us with Resolution and Strength, to suffer in such a Spirit, as may be for thy Glory, and the Eternal Advantage of our own Souls.

Grant this our Petition, O God, and may this be to us the Blessing of this Day.

R. And now on the Day of a Martyr let Impatience be seen in us, but may we suffer in the Spirit of a Martyr. Amen.

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Let us pray.

HAVE regard to our Weakness, Almighty God ; and because the Weight of our own Actions is an Oppression to us, may the Glorious Intercession of Blessed N. thy Holy Martyr, be a Protection to us. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

On the Day of Many Martyrs.

THis Day being a Memorial of SS. N. and N. who being call'd forth into the Field of Battle, triumph'd over the Enemies of Christ, by giving their Lives in Testimony of their Faith in him ; let us this Day give Thanks for his Mercies to these his Servants and beg likewise for ourselves the Spirit of Martyrdom.

Let us pray.

REceive, O Lord, we beseech thee, the Homage we render thee this Day, Acknowledgment of the Particular Grace bestow'd on these thy Servants.

On the Day of Many Martyrs. 431

It was a singular Effect of thy Goodness and Power, so to confirm them with Courage, as not to value what the World could do against them; so to strengthen their Faith of the Goods to come, as to despise for their Sake all the Conveniencies and Comforts of the present Life.

This we own a great Mercy, in a Nature such as ours is, so Weak, so Corrupt, so Blind, so Fearful of Sufferings, so Greedy of present Enjoyments, so Senseless of what is to come, so Full of Self-love, so Fond of the World, so Averse to Pain: For a Nature of these Ingredients to be rais'd so far above itself, as to despise its own Inclinations, and to follow the Dictates of Faith, thro' Fire, Racks, Wild Beasts, the Sword, and all manner of Torments, and this with Comfort and Joy; this we must acknowledge to be wholly thy Gift, O God; for which we now bow down and praise thy Goodness, and desire all Creatures, both in Heaven and Earth, to join with us, and give the Glory to thy Name.

But while we confess thy Mercies to our Fellow-members, who are gone before, we beseech thee, O God, to have Compassion on us, who are yet in this Vale of Tears, where being encompass'd with Weakness, we have many Trials to go thro',

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thro, which require a Strength much greater than ours.

Have Mercy therefore on us, and give us the Spirit of Martyrdom. For tho' it may not be our Portion to meet with Persecutors, by Violence to take away our Liberty or Lives; yet so, O God, thou hast been pleas'd to ordain it, that there is no Passage for us to Heaven, but thro' many Tribulations; and that all shall suffer Persecution, who will live piously in Jesus Christ.

This being the Condition of our State, that we are to suffer, we implore thy Mercy this Day, who know'st our Weakness, that thou would'st please to prepare us for whatever thou hast appointed for us; that thou would'st give us Strength amidst the great Infirmities of our Nature, to receive and bear, whatever we are to suffer, in such a manner, that it may be for the Good of our Souls, and that we may shew by our Suffering whose Disciples we are.

We have a great Example before us this Day in the Martyrs we honour; and we beseech thee, that being so frequently call'd upon by such Glorious Examples, we may not pass them by with a Ceremonial Remembrance, but may likewise learn from them in what manner we are to suffer. For what will it avail us to honour thee with Patience, if we still live on Impatient?

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On the Day of Many Martyrs. 433

Let thy Grace therefore, O God, direct and help us in this Point; for we also profess ourselves the Disciples of Jesus Christ; we are Disciples of the Cross, and we know, that not only the Martyrs, but we likewise, are to take up our Cross, to follow our Master, and to follow him in his own Steps, and in the same Spirit; in the Spirit of Submission to thy Holy Will, in the Spirit of Patience, in the Spirit of Humility, in the Spirit of Meekness.

This we know, this we profess; but O God! O God! How far are we from doing it! How far are we from Suffering in this Spirit, who no sooner fall under any Trouble, but 'tis presently attended with Impatience, Passion or Dejection. And how unlike is this to thy Spirit, O Jesus! This we confess is not carrying our Cross, but throwing it off our Shoulders; it is not following thee, but taking up the Cross to fight against thee: 'Tis shewing ourselves not to be thy Disciples in the very Point, where we are call'd to own it.

Unhappy certainly are we, who having long profess'd ourselves the Disciples of Jesus, have not yet learn'd to take up our Cross and follow him. How can we expect any Part in Jesus Glorified, if we do not know him Crucified? And how do we know him Crucified, if, being call'd

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to the Cross, there appears nothing of a Disciple in us, but only the Marks of Unbelievers?

Wherefore, O God, to thee we make our Petition; beseeching thee to correct in us this our Weakness, to take from us the Spirit of Impatience, and to give us a better, even the Spirit of the Martyrs, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Head of Martyrs; so that, as often as any Trouble shall befall us, we may no more yield to Nature, as the Heathen does, but, like Disciples of Christ, receive it as Part of our Cross; and in the manner of bearing it shew we belong to him, in being govern'd, not by Nature, but by Faith in Jesus Christ.

Hear us, O God of Mercy, and let this be thy Blessing to us this Day, that in all our Suffering we may shew so much Humility, Patience and Courage, as to give Testimony of Christ. The Martyrs did this in the Effusion of their Blood, may we do the same in all kind of Suffering, that so we may give Proof of having the Spirit of the Martyrs.

In all Sickness and Pain may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. R. Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.

On the Day of Many Martyrs. 435

In all inward Uneasiness, Disquiet, Darkness, Weight and Oppression of Mind, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. *R. Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

In all Losses of Friends or Goods, under all Injustice, Perverseness or Malice, or Indiscretion, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. *R. Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

In all Contradictions, Reproofs, Reproaches, false Accusations, Injuries, Affronts, Neglects, Contempts, and in all the Persecution of Ill Tongues, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. *R. Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

In all the Difficulties of our State, the hard Circumstances of Life, in the Uneasy Humours of those on whom we depend, in the frequent Occasions we have of Contentions, Disputes, and Dislikes, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with

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with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. R. *Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

In all our Spiritual Infirmities, Weakness of Mind, in our own Oversight and Indiscretions, or whatever other Occasions of Abjection or Disgrace, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. R. *Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

In all Scourges from thy Hand, O God, in all Publick Calamities, and Domestic Evils, in all Temptations, Afflictions, Troubles and Persecutions whatever, may we govern Nature, may we suffer with Patience, Humility and Courage, and thus shew whose Disciples we are. R. *Grant this, O God, and thus, with the Martyrs, may we give Testimony of Christ in our Suffering.*

Hear us, O God of Mercy, and grant these our Petitions, that, having many things to suffer in this World, we may have the Comfort of our Suffering, and make Improvement under it, to the good of our Souls.

We have lost too many of these Occasions already by our Impatience, and given both

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both Ill Example and Scandal to our Neighbour by our Ungovern'd Passion: But behold, O God, we now humble ourselves at the Remembrance of these our manifold Sins, and implore thy Mercy for our Pardon; forgive us, O Father of Mercy, forgive us, and now grant us a better Spirit, such as may inspire us with a holy Emulation of thy Martyrs, in submitting to all the Troublesome Exercises of Life, bearing them with an humble Mind, and endeavouring to make some Atonement for all our Sinful Impatience.

Grant, O God, we may shew no Impatience on this Day of Martyrs.

R. Grant we may suffer all according to the Example of the Martyrs.

Let us pray.

O God, who do'st comfort us with the yearly Solemnity of thy holy Martyrs N. and N. mercifully grant, that as we rejoyce in their Triumphs, so we may be encouraged by their Examples. Thro' our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On the Day of a Holy Bishop.

THIS being the Day of S. N. a Holy Bishop of Christ's Church, who Faithfully discharg'd the Office of a Good Shepherd, in taking Care of his Flock; and being singularly Eminent for many Virtues, shin'd as a Light to the World; let us give Thanks to Almighty God for his wonderful Graces to this his Servant, and beg a like Mercy on all the present Pastors of the Church.

Let us pray.

WE acknowledge, O God, thy great Mercy to this thy Servant, who being call'd to the Pastoral Dignity, was so eminently distinguish'd by thy Grace, who both by Word and Example was a Light to his Flock, was a Father to the Poor, a Comforter to the Afflicted, an Encourager of the Good, an Enemy to Vice and Error, and zealously labour'd for the Salvation of all.

For these thy Graces so remarkable in him, we give thee Thanks, O God, who art the Author of all Good Gifts, who art

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the Fountain of all those Blessings, which thy Faithful have at all Times receiv'd from the Hands of their Pastors: These we honour as the Ministers of thy Power and Word; but to thee is to be given the Glory of whatever Good they do; to thee therefore, O Sovereign Pastor of Souls, we give Praise, Adoration and Thanksgiving, for calling this thy Servant to the Charge of Souls, and for all those Graces by which he was fitted for performing the Obligations of it. Thy Church has receiv'd the Benefit of his Care, and now, O God, in the Name of the Church we bow down and confess the Greatness of thy Mercy.

But to this our Homage of Thanks we add our Petition to thee, our God, for the Continuance of this Mercy upon all those, who throughout thy Church are in the Pastoral Charge. Pour forth, we beseech thee, thy Plentiful Grace upon all these, and give them a Spirit answerable to their Character.

Give them the Spirit of Zeal, that they may keep up the Discipline of the Church, and be watchful against all Abuses. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of Charity, that they may walk in all thy Commandments, and be forward in relieving all the Necessities of their Flock. R. *Amen.*

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Give them the Spirit of Compassion, that they may become all to all. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of Understanding, that they may discern the Ways of Justice and of Truth, and chuse proper Expedients for Effecting whatever belongs to their Charge. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of Courage, that no Human Respects may ever awe them against Duty. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of Patience, that they may never be tir'd under the many Difficulties of their Charge. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of true Piety, that they may be as so many Lights to their Flock; that they may never countenance any thing that is Disedifying, either in themselves, or in those who are under their Care. R. *Amen.*

Give them the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that like Good Shepherds they may give their Lives for their Flock. R. *Amen.*

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, in these our Petitions, and for the Good of thy Church, mercifully vouchsafe to be with those, whom thou hast put over it. Be thou their Guide, who are to guide us, and thus may they be to us the Ministers of our Salvation.

We are sensible, O God, how great a Mercy there is in this thy Institution, and

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that Good Pastors are a Great Blessing. We are sensible too that Evil or Disedifying Pastors are a very Great Judgment, tho' not greater than our Sins deserve. But, we beseech thee, O God, whatever our Sins be, let not this be our Punishment. For if the Salt lose its favour, and be corrupt, we know how this must be to their Prejudice, who are to be season'd by it. Spare us therefore, O God, in this Point, and let not our Sins rob us of this Part of thy Mercy. Give us such Pastors, as may be a Light to us in every Duty ; and give us such a Docil Spirit, as to receive their Instruction, and be led by their Example. *Amen.*

Having thus pray'd for those, who have the Care of the Flock, let us pray likewise for ourselves, and for the whole Flock, that God would please to deliver it from all its sinful Corruptions, and by his Grace render us a Holy and Acceptable People, so as to be well-pleasing in his Sight.

Let us pray.

O GOD, by whose Mercy we are call'd to the Knowledge of thee, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, and not only Adopted thy Children, but likewise made Members of that Mystical Body, of which Christ is the Head ; perfect this

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thy Mercy in us, and in all who are call'd to this Dignity, that in all Virtue and Holiness of Life we may walk worthy of our Vocation, and shew ourselves to be the Living Members of Jesus Christ.

For this End, we beseech thee, O Father of Mercy, in a particular manner to look upon all those, who are Members of this Mystical Body; and as thou hast cleans'd them by the Water of Regeneration, so let thy Powerful Grace now purify them from all that which is not according to the Sanctity of their Profession.

As their Faith is Holy, so, O God of Holiness, let their Lives be too; and let no Practice of Unbelievers be found in those, who have a true Faith in Jesus Christ.

From all that is Vicious and Corrupt, and from whatever is a Scandal to their Profession. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all the Abominations of the Heathens, in which is Brutish and Sensual, for which they were given over to a Reprobate Mind. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From Rioting, Gluttony, and all Degrees of Intemperance. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From

On the Day of a Holy Bishop. 443

From the Love of Idle Company, Dangerous Conversation, and Sinful Entertainments. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all the Disorders of an Undisciplin'd Life. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all the Excesses of a Vain and Prodigal Humour. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all Kinds of Injustice in Commerce and Trade; from Over-reaching one another in Business, and from doing any Wrong. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From making Idols of themselves in all the Ways of Vanity, and from the Study of gratifying their own Corruption. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From the Spirit of Malice, Envy, Backbiting, Hypocrisy and Contention. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From Covetousness, Cruelty and Oppression. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From the Contempt of what is Sacred, from the Spirit of Prophaneness and Irreligion. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all the Ways of Corrupting Youth, and from all wicked Endeavours of drawing others into Sin. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From the manifold Unhappiness of a Worldly Spirit, in being bent with Excess upon Gain, in being immoderately sollicitous for present Concerns, and Careless

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less of what is to come. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

From all the Contrivance of Wicked and Reprobate Minds, which join with the Devil in ridiculing what is Exemplary and Holy, and make it their Glory to damn others, and to succeed in their Wickedness. *R. Deliver them, O Lord.*

Be favourable to us, O God, and grant these our Petitions, in which we see not ourselves, but the general Good of thy People, and, above all things, thy Glory.

We are very sensible, how great a Scandal is given by the disorderly and wicked Lives of those, who profess thy Truth, and that by their evil Practices thy Church is Blasphem'd, by which their Sins turn not only to their own Damnation, but, like Fruitful Monsters, are propagated to the Destruction of many.

And in this, O God, how much is thy Glory lessen'd upon Earth, whilst Error and Vice are by such Scandals flourish'd with Arms; and not only fight but even triumph against Virtue and Truth!

Wherefore we most humbly beseech thee, for the Glory of thy Name, and for the Cause of the Gospel, that thou wouldst vouchsafe to take away these Scandals, to remedy these Evils, to give to Christians

Horro

On the Day of a Holy Bishop. 445

Horror of all Wickedness, and make them so sensible of their Duty, as by the Exemplary Practices of a Penitential Life to make Atonement for all the Evils by which they have injur'd their Profession, been a Snare to their Neighbours, and provok'd thy Wrath against them.

Hear us, O God, for thy Name's sake, and for the Sake of thy Faithful, for whom Christ shed his Sacred Blood. Let not Wickedness any more prevail in thy Fold; but as thy Institution is Holy, as the Foundation and Head is Holy, as the Faith is Holy; so grant, O God, that the Professors of it may have a true Sense of their Duty, and walk worthy of their Vocation in all Holiness, as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

Grant they may attend to the Spirit of this Holy Pastor, and by his Example be directed into the Way of thy Commandments. And since thou, O God, hast been so Merciful to thy Flock as to have provided it with such Holy Shepherds, grant that the Charity and Zeal of this Holy Prelate, which was so serviceable to thy Flock, while in this Mortal Flesh, may now by his Prayers be Helpful to it, and solicit before thy Throne for its overcoming Sin, and for its accomplishment in all Good. *Amen.*

Let

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Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that this Holy Solemnity of S. N. thy Confessor and Bishop, may be to us the Encrease of Devotion, and advance us in the Way of Salvation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On the Day of a Confessor, not a Bishop.

THis being the Day of S. N. who confess'd Christ before Men, both in his remarkable Patience, in what he suffer'd for Justice sake, and in the sweet Odour of a Virtuous Life, in which he gave Testimony of Christ and his Gospel; let us give Thanks to Almighty God for the Exemplary Sanctity of this his Servant, and beg Grace that we, and all the Faithful, may follow, in Proportion to our Circumstances, the Example he has given us of a Holy Life.

Let us pray.

BEfore thee, O Eternal God, Father Almighty, we bow down this Day, and adore thee, in Acknowledgment of thy

thy Singular Mercies to this thy Servant, in the Privilege of many Graces bestow'd on him, to thy Glory, to the Edifying of the Faithful, and the Good of the whole Church.

'Tis thy great Mercy, that amidst the many Difficulties and Dangerous Temptations of this Life, thou hast provided us with such Eminent Lights, such Examples of Virtue, as may reproach us for our Sloth and Self-love, may spur on our Dull and Unthinking Minds, and encourage us against Despair.

For these thy Mercies to us, and in particular for the Saint of this Day, we give thee Thanks, acknowledging it a great Blessing, that we have so many saving Lessons in him, by which we are taught to overcome ourselves, and by what Methods we are to Advance in the Way of Salvation.

He has taught us by his Example, how much our Corrupt Nature may be subdued, and brought into Subjection to thy Law, O God. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.*

He has taught us to fight against all our Sinful Inclinations, and to separate from all those things, which flatter and feed our Corruption. R. *For this, O God, we give thee*

448 *On the Day of a Confessor,*
thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may
learn from his Example.

He has taught us to despise the Pompous and Great Things of this World, as Unprofitable and Dangerous; and to chuse those Things, which the World despises, as the more helpful to Eternity. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.*

He has taught us, that the Love of all Worldly Things is vain and passing; that they deceive such, as seek their Happiness in them; and that, while we are in this Life, there is something else to be lov'd, and another Happiness to be sought, which is Eternal. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.*

He has taught us, that to seek thee in a Retreat from the World, affords more Substantial Comfort, than all the Glittering Trifles of State or Ambition in all its Triumphs. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.*

He has taught us to seek thee in Fasting and Prayer, and in all those Self-denials, which are proper for bringing the Flesh into Subjection to the Spirit. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most*

most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.

He has taught us to follow the Steps of our Redeemer, in the Practice of a General Humility and Obedience, in bearing Reproaches, in forgiving Injuries, in Loving thee above all Things, and before all Things desiring to do thy Holy Will. R. *For this, O God, we give thee Thanks, and most humbly beg we may learn from his Example.*

For these and all other Instructions given us by this thy Servant, we render thee Thanks, O Eternal Father, and most humbly beseech thee so to prepare our Souls by thy Grace, that we may learn from his Example.

For we confess, O God, our Necessities; we are in Want of this Grace, while having the same Race to run as he had, the same Concern of Eternity upon our Hands, we are so far from his Method, that we scarce seem to be in earnest in what we propose.

For when we look upon ourselves, what do we discover? Sloth and Self-love reigning in us, Pride and the World commanding in the greatest Part of our Lives; we are Industrious in all Affairs, where Corruption or Worldly Interest push us on; we are Eager in following Inclination, we spare no Cost or Pains, where our Fancy
calls

450 *On the Day of a Confessor,*

calls for it, we venture Health, Reputation and Life, for Humour, we sacrifice all to our own Wills, so that when we have taken a true Survey of our Lives, we see the Work of Sin, Sensuality, Pride, Self-love and the World, very much carried on every Day, and advanc'd by us: But as to the Work of our Salvation, O God, what can we discover but some weak Attempts, some few Ceremonial Performances; but the more Substantial Duties either forgotten or neglected, if not despaired of by us! And what advance do we make in all this towards Heaven!

O Blessed God, we see our Perverseness, and have Reason to be confounded at it. We see how vain this World is, with all that belongs to it; and yet how Sollicitous are we, how are our Lives consum'd in courting this Deceit! We apprehend what Eternity is, with the Goods and Evils of this Unchangeable State, and yet how little Serious, how very little Pains do we take in this grand Affair!

Have not we therefore Reason now to lament our Misery, and call out to thee our God, for Help? For while we see thy Servants using Violence against Corruption, and taking Heaven by Force, we in the mean Time are busy about Trifles, and act so much the Traitors to ourselves, asel our

to be encouraging and strengthening all those Evils, which, if not subdued, must be our Destruction.

This, O God, is too much our Character, and therefore sensible of our Misfortune, we now humble ourselves, and make our Petitions to thee, that thou would'st please to renew a right Spirit within our Bowels: That thou would'st take from us this selfish and worldly Spirit, and inspire us with Resolutions of beginning a new Life.

That thou would'st vouchsafe to disengage our Hearts from the Sinful Love of all that is Created, and draw our Hearts to thee, with the Bonds of Love and Obedience. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That we may be truly Converted from all our Sinful Ways, and by a Sincere Repentance labour to make our Peace with thee. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That we may labour to resist Sin, and overcome our Ill Habits, by the Exercises of a Penitential Life. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That denying our Inclination, we may walk in the Ways of Humility, Meekness, Patience, Self-denial, and make the Gospel our Rule for gaining Heaven. *R. Hear*

452 *On the Day of a Confessor,*

us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.

That we may study our own great Misery and Poverty, and have a Horror of all that, which is design'd to magnify this sinful Clay. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That we may take Time in Studying the true State of our Souls, and enter upon such Methods, as are proper for securing our Eternal Peace. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That we may not be aw'd by the Opinion of the World, but go on with Comfort and Courage in such Ways, as the Gospel recommends. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

That we may consider all the Talents which thou, O God, hast entrusted with us, and examine whether we employ them so, as to be able to give an Account. *R. Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, and grant this our Petition.*

Hear us, O God, in these our Petitions we address to thee; and this, not only for ourselves, but for all the Faithful; that having so many Examples of Holiness in thy Saints, we may endeavour to imitate what we pretend to honour; and by the Encouragement of their Reward, be Sollicitous to follow their Steps.

We

We have a Faith of the same Eternity, for which thy Saints have labour'd; and while they have taught us, that we cannot give too much for the Purchase, grant we may not be sparing of our labour, but think all things as Dung, so we can but gain Christ.

What are all things of this World, if compar'd to Eternity? We confess, O God, they are nothing but a Shadow. And what then is it we do, in consuming our Thoughts and our Care upon Earthly Goods, and neglecting those which are Eternal?

O most Gracious Lord, suffer us not to go on thus, misplacing our Sollicitude and our Labour; but effect it in us by thy Grace, that the Method of our Lives may be more answerable to our Faith: For what can it avail us to believe in thee, our God, and what thou hast promis'd, if we serve not thee, but only Self-love and the World?

We confess, O God, this is not according to what thou hast taught us, nor what we learn from the Examples of thy Saints: and therefore we own that these our Sorrows are not so much our Comfort as our Reproach, whilst they shew us how very unlike we are to those, who have serv'd thee in earnest.

But, O God, we beseech thee, let it be no longer; let this Day be the Change of our Lives; may these Examples of thy

Servants,

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Servants, and the Charity of their Prayers, draw us out of the Track of our usual Disorders, and may the Blessing of thy Grace confirm us in a better Life, even in the Life of thy Gospel, and of thy Saints. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who refreshest our Spirits with the Yearly Solemnity of Blessed N. thy Confessor, mercifully grant, that we, who Celebrate his Glory, may likewise imitate his Actions. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On the Day of a Holy Virgin and Martyr.

THis being the Day of the Holy Virgin and Martyr S. N. who serv'd her Spouse Jesus Christ with Fidelity, and gave her Life a Sacrifice to him; let us give Thanks to Almighty God for this Privilege of Mercy to his Servant, and beg for ourselves a Portion of the same Grace, that we may not be wanting in Patience or Courage.

Let us pray.

BEfore thee, O Almighty and Everlasting God, we bow down and join with all the Blessed above, in admiring thy Goodness, and praising thy Mercy, for the Wonders of thy Grace appearing in this thy Servant, in her Triumphs over Nature, the Devil and the World, in her faithfully serving thee, and giving her Life a Sacrifice to thy Glory.

This, O God, we acknowledge to be the Effects of thy Bounty. For what could a Nature so Weak do amidst the various Assaults of so many powerful Enemies? How could a Constitution so tender, subject to so many Apprehensions and Fears, stand fearless in the Sight of Torments and Death, if thou, O Lord, hadst not fulfill'd thy Promises in thy Servant, and supported her with Heavenly Strength, who put her Trust in thee?

Wherefore, O God, in the Confession of this thy Power and Goodness manifested in thy Servant, we praise, adore, and glorify thy Holy Name.

For her Eminent Sanctity of Life, in despising the World, and amidst so many Temptations faithfully serving her Heavenly Spouse. *R. Blessed be thou, O God.*

For

For her great Constancy, in pursuing the Way of Virtue, notwithstanding the Apprehension she had of suffering for it. R. *Blessed be thou, O God.*

For her great Courage, in not being terrified with the Threats of Cruelty and Malice, but bearing all with a resolute and undaunted Mind. R. *Blessed be thou, O God.*

For her great Patience and Perseverance under the Severity of Torments, and not quitting Duty for the Love of Life. R. *Blessed be thou, O God.*

For her wonderful Submission to thy Holy Will, in drinking of this Bitter Cup, and in the midst of Death still blessing thy Name. R. *Blessed be thou, O God.*

For the Grateful Sacrifice she made of herself, in being consum'd by the Flames of Charity, and giving her Life for thy Glory. R. *Blessed be thou, O God.*

For all these thy singular Privileges of Grace, bestow'd on this Holy Virgin, we desire thy Name, O God, may be Glorified, and that the yearly Return of this Solemnity may excite in thy Faithful a grateful Memory of thy Mercies, and be an Encouragement to them of following the Example of her Piety, her Patience, and her Courage.

In particular we ask, this Day, thy Holy Grace for ourselves, that seeing how
very

Holy Virgin and Martyr. 457

very much this tender Virgin suffer'd with Patience, and a Peaceable Submission to thy Holy Will, we may be asham'd of our great Impatience, who can meet nothing we dislike but with Disturbance and Sin.

Give us, we beseech thee, a true Sense of this our great Indisposition, who are so easy in Resenting, so severe in Reproving, so rash in Censuring, so forward in Fretting; who are so soon provok'd, so warm in our Anger, so blind in our Passion, so loud in Complaining, so easily Dejected.

Give us we beseech thee, a Sense of this our manifold Weakness; and after so much Experience of it, may we now at length understand how very disagreeable this is to our Profession, how contrary to our greatest Interest, and how unlike to the Spirit we Honour in the Martyrs.

Open our Hearts, O Blessed God, to understand this aright, and not only to understand it, but even so as to turn our most serious Endeavours against it, and labour every Day to overcome it. And give thou, O God of Mercy, a Blessing to what we do, that we may gain upon our Weakness, that we may give a Check to the first Approaches of all inward or outward Disturbance, and thus bring ourselves to that true Temper, as to shew to all who are Witnesses of our Conversation, that

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'tis not now the Old, but the New Man rules in us.

Hence, O God, we beseech thee, may we see that good Effect of our Endeavours, as

To bear with Patience all the Scourges, which come immediately from thy Heavenly Hand. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience all the Pains and Sickness of our Body, and Oppressions of our Mind. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience all Domestick Troubles, and whatever Difficulties we meet in satisfying the Obligations of our State. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience all the uneasy Tempers of those, with whom we converse. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience all Affronts, Injuries, and whatever other Provocations are given us by any Neighbours. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience all Contradictions or Reproofs, tho' undeserved, as likewise whatever we suffer through the Malice, Injustice or Indiscretion of others. R. *Grant this, O God.*

To bear with Patience the Difficulties of our own Temper, the Infirmities of our Mind, and all the Trouble we have in overcoming ourselves. R. *Grant this, O God.*

Grant

Holy Virgin and Martyr. 459

Grant these our Petitions, O God, and, for this End we beseech thee to direct our Endeavours, that we may every Day keep a strict Watch upon ourselves, and observing the Motions of our Soul, may be ever Industrious in suppressing all those, which are the Effect of Impatience.

Hence, O God, we beseech thee, give us Strength to resist all the Motions we perceive in us to Anger and Passion. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give us Grace to Govern our Words, that we may never break forth into any Injurious, Biting, or Provoking Expressions. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give us Grace to suppress all Kind of Revengeful or Malicious Thoughts, and whatever are suggested by that ill Principle of returning Evil for Evil. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give us Grace to cast off all fretful Resentments, and the unjust Reasoning of an exasperated or disturb'd Mind. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give us Grace to break off with Violence all Melancholy and Dejecting Arguments. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Give us Grace to withstand all Kind of discouraging Thoughts, which upon Disappointments dissuade us from pursuing the Good we have undertaken. R. *We beseech thee, hear us.*

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, in all these Particulars; give us Grace never to be tir'd in our Endeavours, and may our Endeavours be ever attended with thy Blessing. Thus by persevering may we overcome our Temper, however difficult it be, and bring it into Subjection to thy Law. We have been too long govern'd by it, and by its Rashness led into many Sins; there has been too much of this; now, O God, by the Help of thy Grace may we undertake to subdue it, and teach it to obey. Without this we in vain Honour the Martyrs; and by this Method only can we come to the Spirit of the Martyrs, which is the Blessing we most earnestly ask of thee this Day, our Lord and our God.

And not only for ourselves, but in particular we ask it for all those of thy Faithful, who being in Trouble, want thy special Grace to stand under it, as either offending thee by their Impatience, or being in danger of Despair. Look upon all these, we beseech thee, support them in their Trouble, and give them Patience.

Look upon all those, who are under the Violence of Pain or Sickness. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon all those, who are in Captivity, or in Prison, or under any Oppression of Injustice. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

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Holy Virgin and Martyr. 461

Look upon all those, who suffer Persecution, or are under Hardships for their Faith.

R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon all those, who are in Trouble of Conscience, direct them, we beseech thee. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon those, who are under the Weight of any Affliction, support them by thy Grace. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon all those, who lie under Darkness, Oppression of Mind, or are exposed to the Violence of Temptation; be thou a comfort to them. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon all Widows and Orphans, upon all who are Disconsolate, and upon such as are under the Severity of Domestick Trials; be thou their Counsel and Director. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Look upon all in whatever Distress or Affliction they be, whether of Body or Mind, and let them find that thou art their God. R. *And give them Patience, O Lord.*

Thus, O Heavenly Father, on the Day of this Martyr, we recommend to thy Merciful Protection all that are in Trouble, and most humbly beg both for them, and for our selves, that we may learn to make a good Use of our Trials; and by our Pa-

tience under them, may, with the Martyrs, make them the Purchase of an Eternal Crown. Grant this, O God, and now while we are taught by thy Servant how we are to suffer, let this Day no Impatience be seen in us. And thou, O Holy Martyr, as thy Example teaches, so let thy Charity plead for us, that we may follow thy Steps. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who amongst other Wonders of thy Power, hast render'd even the weaker Sex victorious in Martyrdom, mercifully grant that we, who celebrate the Triumphs of S. N. Virgin and Martyr, may by her Example come to the Possession of thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

On the Day of a Holy Virgin, not Martyr.

THis being the Day of S. N. a Holy Virgin, who by a Life of Singular Piety became the Glory of the Church, and an Example to all Christians; let us give Thanks to Almighty God for the great Prerogatives of
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Holy Virgin, not Martyr. 463

Grace bestow'd upon her, and likewise beg that by her Example we and all Christians may be led into the Way of Salvation.

Let us pray.

Before thee, O God of Infinite Majesty, we bow down and adore this Day, in Acknowledgment of thy singular Gifts and Graces so remarkably eminent in this thy Servant, by which thou hast rais'd so weak a Vessel to that Degree of Holiness, as to become a Light in thy Church, an Encouragement to Virtue, and a Guide in all those Ways, which the Gospel recommends as the safest Paths to Salvation.

For these thy Mercies to this Holy Virgin, we render thee Praise and Thanksgiving, and beg that thy Name may be bless'd by all Generations.

For calling her out of the World, to become thy Faithful Servant. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For giving her Grace to despise the deceitful Vanities of the World, and to chuse the better Part. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For giving her Strength to stand against all the Snares of Corruption, and to Triumph over all the Enemies of her Soul. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For leading her into the Narrow Way, and teaching her to renounce all Things for the Love of her Spouse. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For teaching her to walk by the Spirit, and to hate her Life in this World, that she might keep it to Life Eternal. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

For teaching her to keep a clean Heart, so to prepare to see thy Face. R. *Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God.*

Praise and Thanksgiving be to thee, O God, for these, and all other thy Gifts, with which thou wast pleas'd in thy Mercy to enrich the Soul of thy Servant, giving her the Victory over all her Enemies, and carrying her through many Trials to an Everlasting Crown.

But, O God, while we thus with Honour commemorate the Blessings of thy Mercy in others, may thy Infinite Goodness have Regard to us also, who are in want of thy Help; and work that Change in our Souls, that we may find the Effect of those Graces in our selves, which we so much approve and admire in the Saint of this Day.

Draw us by the Power of thy Grace from our own Ways, and from all those of the World, which are Corrupt; and grant we may now in earnest undertake to walk by a better Spirit, even by that Spirit of

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Holy Virgin, not Martyr. 465

Jesus and his Gospel, which was so remarkable in this Holy Virgin, and conducted her to the Presence of her Spouse.

Lead us, O God, we beseech thee, into the Way of her Humility, that having a true Sense of our own Unworthiness, we may decline all the Contrivances of Pride as most unjust, may esteem our selves the meanest of all, and embrace Contempt as our Due. *R. Teach us, O God, to be truly Humble, and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.*

Lead us, O God, we beseech thee, into the Way of her Self-denial and Penance, that we may no longer consult our own Wills, our Inclination and Appetite, but consider what is due to our Sins, what is necessary for overcoming our own Corruption, and hence take the Measures of what we are to do, and what to avoid. *R. Teach us, O God, the Ways of Self-denial and Penance, and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.*

Lead us, O God, we beseech thee, into the Way of her Patience, that we may bear all the Trials, Troubles, Losses, and Temptations of this Life, with a peaceable Submission to thy Providence, to thy Justice, and to thy Holy Will; and thus subduing in ourselves all Sinful Disquiets, be solicitous to improve under all our Troubles. *R. Teach us, O God, to be thus Patient,*

and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.

Lead us, O God, into the Way of her Charity, that we may love thee and seek thee above all Things; that we may banish from our Hearts the sinful and dangerous Love of all Creatures; that we may give Admittance to no Excess, to nothing that can defile; but labour to preserve in our Breasts clean Hearts, such as may be fit for thy Abode. R. *Teach us, O God, this Charity, to love thee with all our Hearts; and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.*

Lead us, O God, we beseech thee, into the Way of her true Wisdom, that we may not waste our Lives in Folly, Vanity or Sin, or in providing only for a short Life, which with all its Contrivances and Cares must soon end in Dust; but may employ our Time in such a manner, as by the good Management of a few Moments, to secure our Eternal Rest. R. *Teach us, O God, this True Wisdom, and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.*

Lead us, O God, into the Way of her Constancy, that we may never be tir'd, either with the Trials of this Life, or the Remedies of our own Corruption, or the Duties of our State; in all these may we hold on with Perseverance, ever looking a

Christ

Holy Virgin, not Martyr. 467

Christ our Head, and at the Crown that is set before us. R. *Teach us, O God, this Constancy, and in this may we follow the Spirit of this Saint.*

In this manner, we beseech thee, O God, to direct our Lives, that having so many Examples of thy Saints every Day calling upon us, we may not go on Blind and Senseless in the Ways of our own Corruption, as if we had been Born for nothing, but to live here in Folly and Vice; but may turn ourselves to thee, our Creator and our God, and enter into such a Method, as will be a Comfort to us at the Hour of our Death, and be a Means of bringing us to the Possession of Everlasting Happiness.

For this End shew thy Mercy to us, O God, and open our Eyes, that we may see the Disorders of our Lives, and all those Weaknesses, which make us unlike what we profess: Deliver us, in this Point, from all Deceit, and suffer us not to be so unhappy, as to embrace Snares and Sin, under the Pretext of Innocence. Shew us what we are, and give us a true Knowledge of all our Ways; and, O God, favour us, we beseech thee, with that Grace, which is necessary for our Amendment; that while we honour thy Servants, we may follow the Example they have given
us,

us, and be in the Way of partaking of their Crowns.

And in particular, O most Gracious Lord, since thou hast call'd us not to Uncleaness, but to Holiness, give us Grace to purify our Hearts from all that can defile. Let not the Iniquity of the Heathens be found in us, who are Believers; but being disengag'd from all Sinful Affection, may we keep that due Guard both upon our Outward and Inward Man, that the Devil may find no Entrance into our Hearts; but these being preserv'd Holy, may be such as become the Temples of the Holy Ghost.

Thus, O God, we confess it ought to be in every Soul; which, having renounc'd at the Font the Devil and all his Works, has been consecrated a Living Sacrifice to thee, and adopted thy Child. Wherefore, we beseech thee, O God, to give to all Christians a true Sense of their Character, and of that great Sanctity, which belongs to their Profession. Hence, O Lord, give them an Abhorrence of all Wickedness, and especially of all those brutish Liberties, which are in favour of a Carnal or Sensual Mind. Cleanse thy People from all the Abominations of Unbelievers, sanctify their Conversation, and let nothing unbecoming be heard from their Mouth;

but

Holy Virgin, not Martyr. 469

but as thou art Holy, so may they be Holy.

To thy Special Protection we recommend all those, who being in their tender Years, are not yet tainted with Vice. Be thou, O God, a Guide to these, and preserve them from all Snares; give them Discretion, that they may not rashly expose themselves to Danger; give them Courage, that whenever Danger meets them, they may either wisely decline it, or be faithful in resisting it. Let not the Love of Vanity, Folly, and Idle Entertainments, take the First Possession of their Hearts; but draw them to thyself by a Sincere Piety, that thy Goodness being engag'd to them, they may be ever secure under thy Protection.

Have Mercy likewise, we beseech thee, on all those, who having renounc'd the World, have chosen Christ for their Spouse, and consecrated their Lives to thee. Take from them, O God, a worldly Spirit, and perfect in them the Spirit of their Vocation; be thou the Comfort of their Labours, and may it be their daily Endeavour more closely to be united to Christ, whom they have chosen. Deliver them from all Spiritual Delusions, and let nothing hinder them in making their Approaches to thee. And thou, O Holy Virgin, whom we honour this Day, be mindful
of

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of them before the Throne of God; pray for all the Blessings belonging to their State, that God may be glorified in them: Remember us also, who are in the Midst of a Sinful and Uncertain World, that we may be secur'd by the same Powerful Hand which was your Deliverance, and be led on in the same Way to Happiness: Sollicit this for us, through the Merits of Jesus Christ, our Common Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

HEAR us, O God, our Salvation, that as we rejoice in the Festival of thy Holy Virgin S. N. so we may be improv'd in the Affection of solid Piety. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the Day of a Holy Widow.

THIS being the Day of S. N. a Holy Widow, who being releas'd from worldly Engagements, Consecrated her Widowhood to God in a Life of Exemplary Piety; let us give Thanks for the Plenty of Heavenly Graces, so remarkable in this his Servant, and

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and beg Grace that we may learn from her Example.

Let us pray.

TO thee, O Eternal God, we render Thanks for the great Example we have in thy Servant, whose Virtues, with their Rewards, the Church calls us to Commemorate this Day. She had her Part in the World, but even in that distracted State she laid the Foundation of a Holy Life; and having got the Opportunity of greater Freedom, she turn'd it not to the Service of Natural Corruption and Self-love, but improv'd her Disengagements from the World, for making more strict Engagements with thee.

Thus shutting her Heart against the World, and opening it towards Heaven, she receiv'd the Plenty of Heavenly Blessings, and abounding in all Good, she became an Example to the Faithful, giving a manifold Proof of thy Graces overflowing in her.

Of all which we acknowledge thee, O God, the Fountain, and therefore bless thy Name for whatever we admire in her; looking upon this, and all other Festivals of the Saints, as so many Days of Solemn Acknowledgments of thy Goodness to Sinful Clay; and of Publick Thanksgiving for

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for thy Bounty, in Dispensing thy manifold Gifts, for the Edifying of thy Church, and Encouragement of thy Faithful in all Good.

Therefore whatever Heavenly Gifts and Graces thou wast pleas'd to pour forth upon this thy Servant, we bow down, we adore thee, we give thee Praise and Thanksgiving for them, and beg that Heaven and Earth may join in glorifying thy Holy Name, and making the Acknowledgments due to thy Goodness.

To the same Goodness we address our Petitions, in our own Behalf, beseeching thee to extend thy Mercy to us also; that, as we glorify thee for thy Saints, so we may glorify thee for thy Grace communicated likewise to us, by which we may be directed into the Way of thy Commandments, and be zealous in following their Steps, who in their Lives have shew'd us the Way to Everlasting Bliss.

And now, on this Day, O God, we beseech thee, may thy Grace inspire us with Resolutions of quitting our own Corrupt Ways, and copying out those, which are set before us by the Example of this Saint.

Turn our Eyes, O God, to consider the Christian Wisdom of this thy Servant, in making so good a Use of all the Circumstances of her State; who turn'd not
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On the Day of a Holy Widow. 473

the great Advantages she had to the Service of this World, but sought thy Glory, O God, in all, and made them Preparations for a comfortable and happy Death. R. *Turn our Hearts, O God, we beseech thee, seriously to consider this her Christian Wisdom.*

And hence, O Blessed Lord, may we observe, condemn and reform our own unaccountable, and even foolish Ways, who are ever upon Contrivances how to abuse thy Blessings, in seeking to set out, and satisfy a perishing Carcass, which is soon to return to Dust, and neglect to provide for our better Part, which has an Eternity waiting to receive it, and depending on our Care. R. *Grant us, O God, we beseech thee, the Wisdom to observe, condemn and reform, whatever Part we have in these unaccountable and foolish Ways.*

Turn our Hearts, O God, to consider how Sollicitous she was in making a Good Use of her Time, in not letting it be consum'd by Sleeping, Gaming, and other Idle Entertainments of a Disorderly and Undisciplin'd Life, but Studying to employ it for that End, for which it was granted her; in all those Exercises of Piety, which she knew were acceptable to thee, and most effectual for the Security of her future State. R. *Turn our Hearts, O God, we beseech thee, seriously to consider this her Christian Wisdom.* And

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And hence, O Blessed Lord, may we observe, condemn and reform our own unaccountable and foolish Ways, who having but a short Time granted us to provide for Eternity, and having many and difficult Tasks upon our Hands for making this Provision, are yet such Wretched Ill Managers, as to be often at a loss, how to dispose of our Time, every Day throw it away upon Impertinencies and Trifles, and often Sacrifice it to the Devil and Sin. *R. Grant us, O God, we beseech thee, the Wisdom to observe, condemn and reform, whatever Part we have in these unaccountable and foolish Ways.*

Turn our Hearts, O God, to consider how Sollicitous she was in making a good Use of her Money; not letting Vanity, Humour, or Inclination consume it; but seeking thy Glory in thy own Gifts, and endeavouring to apply it to those Ends, for which it was given her; in relieving the Poor, the Prisoner, and the Distress'd, in bringing Comfort to the Widow and Orphan, in cloathing the Naked, and making Provision for such, whose Necessitous or Dangerous Circumstances expos'd them to Ruin. Thus did she make, of what was Superfluous to her, the Purchase of Eternity. *R. Turn our Hearts, O God, we beseech thee, seriously to consider this her Christian Wisdom.*

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On the Day of a Holy Widow. 475

And hence, O Blessed Lord, may we observe, condemn and reform our own unaccountable and foolish Ways; who, not Sollicitous for laying up Treasures in Heaven, make that ill Use of our Money, as if it were given us for no other End, than to serve our own Extravagant Humours, and to feed that Corruption in us, which by the Command of the Gospel, and by the great Design of our Profession, we are requir'd to fight against and starve. O God! How great is our Injustice, in thus turning thy Blessings against the Gospel, and in throwing away that upon Folly, Vanity or Vice, which ought to have been the Bread of the Poor! R. *Grant us, O God, we beseech thee, the Wisdom to observe, condemn and reform, whatever Part we have in these unaccountable and unjust Ways.*

Hear us, O most Gracious Lord, we beseech thee, and grant these our Petitions; for while we consider thy Holy Servants, and see by what Ways they arriv'd to that State of Bliss, in the Possession of thee their God, we cannot but tremble at the Sight of our own unhappy Circumstances, who pretending to the same Port of Happiness, are so very far out of their Way.

For when we cast but an Eye upon thy Saints; we presently see, in them, Souls thirsting

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thirsting after Heaven, seeking Heaven before all Things, and using all Means, which thy Gospel recommends as proper for accomplishing their Desires; sparing nothing of themselves, or of this World, which can be serviceable for this End, and thinking nothing Hard, nothing a Loss to them, which is but helpful to Eternity.

But when we look upon ourselves, what is it, that with a full Prospect offers itself, to our Sight? O God, 'tis something so unlike our Profession of the Gospel, so very contrary to the Way, by which thy Saints have come to thee; that we have Reason to be confounded within ourselves, whilst we can scarce discover any Thing, to prove that we are serious in our Faith, that we believe an Eternity to come, that there is either a Heaven worth our Care, or a Hell which we need to apprehend. For where does this Faith appear in all that Succession of Pride, Sloth, Self-love, Sensuality, and the Love of the World, which divide all the Days of our Life?

Our Life shews evidently that we Love ourselves, are Fond of the World, and of its Corrupt Ways. But where is the Evidence of our Faith, or Love of thee, unless in some Hasty and Ceremonial Performances, in which our Heart seems but

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On the Day of a Holy Widow. 477

little concern'd? And is this the Way of the Saints!

Wherefore, O most Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to have Compassion on us, and by the Power of thy Grace to work a Change in our Hearts; such a Change, O God, that we may not only be ashamed of our Evil Ways, but likewise have a real Abhorrence of them, as unworthy of our Profession, and as the Snares of Eternal Death.

Such a Change, that our great Sollicitude may no more be in pleasing the World, or satisfying our own Corrupt Nature, but in following the Steps of thy Faithful Servants, in seeking, above all Things, to do thy Holy Will, and to work out our Salvation.

Grant this, O God, not only to us, but to all who have Faith in thy Holy Name; that all Scandalous and Wicked Practices being reform'd, they may walk worthy of their Vocation, and give no Offence either to *Jew* or *Gentile*, nor to the Church of God.

This we ask more in particular for those, who have undertaken to live in the State of Widowhood. Let thy Holy Grace, O God, direct these to withdraw their Hearts from the Common Vanities of the World, to decline all Idle Meetings, and by the Constant Method of their
Lives

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Lives to convince all, that they seek not present Comforts, but those which are to come, and have chosen thee to be their Portion.

Thus, O God, we beseech thee to lead them on by the glorious Example of the Saint of this Day, that becoming Widows indeed, they may have the Comfort of it here, and the Reward hereafter. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

HEAR us, O God, our Salvation, that as we rejoice in the Festival of Blessed S. N. so we may be improv'd in the Affection of Solid Piety. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On the Dedication of a Church.

THIS being the Dedication of S. N. a Memorial of that Day, when Peace being restor'd to the Christian World, and Liberty granted for Building of Churches, this was erected by Constantine, and Consecrated by St. Sylvester, then Bishop of Rome; let us give Thanks for Peace being thus granted

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*to the Church, and beg Grace for making
a good Use of whatever Part we have in this
Peace.*

Let us pray.

O Father of Mercy, to thee we render
our Thanks for thy great Mercy to
the Faithful in the Primitive Times, when
having suffer'd a Cruel Persecution of Three
Hundred Years from the Tyranny of Hea-
thenish Emperors, thou didst at length re-
move the Sword, and, delivering them from
the Hands of their Enemies, gav'st them
an Opportunity of serving thee without
Fear.

This, O God, was a great Blessing to
thy People, who having been so long con-
fin'd in thy Worship to Caves and Desarts,
now had Liberty of openly professing thy
Name, of meeting in Churches, and, in
full Assemblies, of giving Praise to thy
Glory, and this without danger of Fire,
or Sword, or Rack, or of any Temporal
Power appearing to interrupt the Comforts
of their surprizing Peace.

For this thy Goodness to thy Church
we now bless and adore thy Holy Name,
and most earnestly beg thy Protecting
Grace, that thy People may not abuse this
Liberty to thy Displeasure; that they may
be always mindful, how great a Mercy it
is

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is to have the Freedom of serving thee, to have the Comforts of thy Sacraments, and of their Assistance, whom thou hast appointed to feed the Flock, and minister to them in their Necessities.

May the Sense of this manifold Mercy be ever attended with a Grateful Acknowledgment in the Breasts of thy Faithful; may this oblige them to be more Fervent in Prayer, more constant in every Duty, more Edifying in thy Presence, more Sollicitous in serving thee, and more Fearful of offending thee.

O God, we beseech thee, keep their Hearts open to understand this their Obligation, because 'tis due to thy Goodness; and because they can have no greater Assurance of the Continuance of thy Blessings, than by the good Use of what they enjoy.

This, O most Just Lord, thou hast sufficiently manifested to us in thy Rigorous Judgments upon so many Cities, Nations and Countries; which being once bless'd with the Profession of thy Faith and Worship, being the Seats of so many Eminent Bishops, and Holy Pastors, are now many of them Heaps of Ruins; others are overrun with Heresy and Schism, and many are so wholly possess'd by Infidels, that there is not a Christian to be found amongst them.

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On the Dedication of a Church. 481

These, O God, are terrible Judgments, such as ought to make us tremble at the very Thought of them. And what is it, that has drawn the Weight of thy Anger upon these People, but what had done the same before upon the Cities of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, and upon thy Holy Temple? They had forgotten thy Mercies, and abus'd thy Blessings; they remember'd not that thou wast their Deliverer, and therefore they kept not thy Statutes, nor observ'd thy Law. Hence Desolation rush'd in upon them as a Torrent; they were confounded in their Sins; and they who would not know thee in thy Mercies, were forced to confess thee under the Terror of thy Judgments.

Thus, O God, hast thou been pleas'd to manifest the Terms, upon which thy Blessings are held; and that they are not to confide in a lasting Possession, who abuse what thro' thy Goodness they enjoy; wherefore we most earnestly make it our Request to thee, that all thy Faithful throughout the Church, who enjoy the Liberty of thy Worship, may have a true Sense of this Mercy, and by a good Use of it confirm it to themselves, and to their Generations after them, and not leave their Children a Curse instead of a Blessing.

And while we ask this for the Faithful, remember, we beseech thee, all those un-

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happy Cities and Nations who were once thy People, but are now buried in Heresy or Infidelity. Forget them not, O God, for ever, but let thy Mercies be turn'd upon them. Open their Eyes to see their Misery, open their Hearts to receive thy Grace: Take from them all Obstinacy, and prepare their Minds to embrace thy Truths. Raise up those, who may carry Light to them; let them no longer lie open to Rapine, but unite them again to thy Fold, and may all Nations with one Voice glorify thee their God.

Remember us also, O Blessed Lord, in this Nation, and grant us that Favour, as to serve thee without Fear. Look not upon our Sins, for we confess these to be very Provoking; such as render us unworthy of all thy Mercies, and make us fear the Loss of whatever Privileges we enjoy. And therefore, while we ask, O God, for thy Favour, we acknowledge ourselves unworthy of what we ask; but implore thy Goodness to have Compassion on us, and not to deal with us according to our Iniquities. Save thy Inheritance, we beseech thee, and for the Sake of thy Elect, give us not up to Destruction. Teach us to make a good Use of whatever Opportunities we have of serving thee; teach us to be thankful for them; let us complain

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of none but our own Sins; upon these may we charge all our Unhappiness; and therefore make Choice of Humiliation and Repentance, as the only Expedient for removing thy Scourges from us.

For this End we beseech thee to put it into the Hearts of thy Faithful, to reform all Abuses in their publick Assemblies, as often as they meet to pay the Homage, that is due to their God.

As often as we come into thy Holy Place, may we remember in whose Presence we are; may we call to mind thy Infinite Majesty, and our own Wants; and as these demand, so regulate our Outward and Inward Man.

May it be our first Sollicitude to avoid all kind of Irreverence and Indecency, and whatever can be disedifying to others. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we take no Liberties in favour of an Idle, Gazing or Vain Humour. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we not there consult our Ease, nor be more Sollicitous to serve our own lazy Humour, than do what is becoming thy Worship. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we not there with Clipping and Huddling run over our Prayers, as if making an end was our only Concern. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

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May we not there, with a dissipated and roving Mind, repeat over a Number of Prayers, as if a Lip-service were all the Sacrifice belonging to thy Worship. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we have so much Faith and Seriousness, as to be afraid of provoking thee there, where we come to ask thy Blessings. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we there see the extreme Poverty and manifold Miseries of our Soul, and make our Petitions with an Attention and Sollicitude answerable to our Necessities. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we there see ourselves as Criminals, condemn'd for our Sins to the Torments of Hell; may we there appear with the Humility of Criminals before our Judge, and raise up our Hearts with the same Earnestness, as those who are Petitioning for Mercy. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

May we there adore thee, as becomes the Infinite Mercy of our God, in whose Presence the Pillars of Heaven tremble; may we there serve thee as becomes Slaves, who have been Redeem'd by thee; may we there manifest our Love to thee, as becomes thy Children; who tho' most unworthy, have receiv'd Infinite Blessings from

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from thy Hand, as of a most Loving and Tender Father. R. *Grant this our Petition, O Merciful God.*

Shew Mercy to us, O God, and grant these our Requests not only to us, but to all the Faithful, that all may serve thee in Spirit and Truth; that all Abuses, Irreverences and Scandals, being banish'd from the Places of thy Worship, they may become the Houses of Prayer, and nothing be admitted there, but what is well-pleasing in thy Sight.

Grant this, O God, that by the good Use of thy Blessings we may obtain the Continuance of them, and remove the Danger from us of being left desolate, which has been the Punishment of so many Nations. Hear us, O Merciful Lord, and let Gratitude, under the Sense of thy Favours, teach us to be wise in this Point, that so we may have no part in provoking the Severity of thy Scourges against us. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who every Year renewest to us the Consecration of this Holy Church, and by thy Sacred Mysteries affordest us the Blessing of thy Protection; graciously vouchsafe to hear the Prayers of thy People, and grant that as many, as enter into this

Church to Petition for thy Favours, may have the Comfort of obtaining what they ask. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

On all Fridays.

THIS being the Day, on which Christ died on the Cross, a voluntary Sacrifice for the Redemption of Man; let us renew the Memory of this infinite Mercy, and acknowledge it before Almighty God, in the most grateful Manner we can.

Let us pray.

BEfore thee, O Eternal Father, we assemble and bow down this Day, oblig'd by the Infinite Mercy we have receiv'd from thy Hand: For that having been lost by Sin, and being incapable of ourselves of ever making our Peace with thee, and recovering the Way of Salvation, thou wast pleas'd to have Compassion on us, and sending thy only Son to become Man, didst by the Effusion of his Sacred Blood redeem us from our unhappy State, and put us in the Way of working out our Salvation.

For

For this thy Mercy, O God, in so loving the World, as to give thy only Son for it, we Praise thee, we Adore thee, we Magnify thee, we desire all the Blessed Choirs above to acknowledge and give Thanks for this Excess of thy Goodness to Lost Man, in rescuing him from his Captivity, and by the Death of thy Son purchasing him Liberty of a Slave.

O God! who can sufficiently admire this Expedient of thy Mercy! Who is able to make any Return for what thou hast done for us Sinners! All that we can do is to confess thy Goodness, and to own that we are thy Purchase; that being ransomed by the Blood of Christ we belong to thee.

Behold therefore, O God, this we acknowledge before thee; we are thine upon a manifold Title, but particularly for that we have been bought at so great a Price, as the Blood of our Redeemer; and obliged by this Title; behold we now make an Offering of ourselves to thee; we offer our Body, our Soul, with all their Faculties, Inclinations and Senses; we offer our Time, with all our Temporal Substance; we offer all the several Circumstances of our Lives, whether those which are agreeable to us, or others that are Afflicting: All we offer to thee, confessing it to be Just, that what is thine should be employed in thy Service,

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should be directed by thy Will, should be referred to thy Glory.

Confirm us, O God, we beseech thee, in the Offering we make, that as we own the Justice, so we may be Faithful in the Execution of it. For this End strengthen us, O Merciful Lord, by thy Grace, that notwithstanding our great Weakness, and the endless Temptations of Life, we may be ever mindful of our Duty, and suffer nothing to persuade us to what we own to be Unjust.

Suffer not, O God, the World to prevail upon us, to observe its Ways and Orders, contray to what thy Gospel teaches.

Suffer not our own Corruption to prevail upon us, to favour its Inclinations, and satisfy its Desires contrary to what thou hast commanded.

Suffer not Company or Ill Custom to prevail upon us, to comply in any sinful Disorder, or in whatever is not agreeable to thy Holy Will.

Suffer not the Devil, by any Temptation or Snare, to prevail upon us to yield to any Thing, either in Thought, Word or Deed, which is displeasing to thee.

In all these Particulars we most humbly implore thy Grace, O God, to be our Guard, our Protection and Strength, because we confess it our Duty to be thus

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Just and Faithful in thy Service; and we confess our Infirmities to be such, that without thy Divine Assistance we must certainly fail.

Help us therefore, O most Gracious Lord, and by the Mercy of this Day, in which thou hast given us such Proof of thy Goodness and Love, have Compassion on us, and so secure us under the Protection of thy Grace, that having the Comfort of being redeem'd by thee, we may likewise have the Comfort of serving thee all the Days of our Life.

And since our Blessed Redeemer gave his Life on this Day to overcome Sin, and to deliver us from its Tyranny, grant we may not only be careful in serving thee, but likewise distinguish this Day, by joining with Christ our Head in a particular Watchfulness against Sin, and in labouring to overcome all that in ourselves, which puts us in Danger of it.

Hence, O God, since Repentance is necessary for overcoming Sin, give us thy Grace to make this Day a Day of sincere Repentance. May we this Day chuse some Retirement, wherein to consider and lament all our past Iniquities; may our Hearts be seiz'd with Horror upon the Sight of our Ingratitude, Presumption and Rebellion; and having view'd in the

Wounds of our Redeemer, the Hatred thou bearest to Sin, and with what Rigour thou punish'st it, may we then open our Hearts to Grief, and let our Eyes become Fountains of Tears, to bewail our great Unhappiness, under the Guilt of so many Sins, we have unworthily committed against thee, our God; against thee, our Redeemer; against thee, our Father; against thee, our perpetual Benefactor, who hast encompass'd us with Blessings, and follow'd us with Mercies, even all those Years, in which we have so ungratefully offended thee.

In this View of ourselves, may we humble our Souls under the Weight of our Iniquities, confessing all our Crimes before thee, and likewise acknowledging that such Offenders are unworthy of the least of thy Blessings; that such as are allow'd to the Innocent, ought to be denied to us; and that 'tis not fit such Criminals should be gratified in their Desires, or favour'd in their Inclinations.

Hence, O God, on this Day, above others, may it be our Practice to live as becomes repenting and humbled Sinners, purposely declining whatever is not agreeable to this State of Humiliation. May we decline all Publick Shews, Gaming and Entertainments; may we avoid Unprofitable Visits; may we give no Indulgence to

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Curiosity or Sloth ; may we not study Vanity or Appetite, nor seek Idle Mirth ; but rather live retir'd in mourning for our Sins ; secluded from all those Satisfaction which others take, as not agreeable to the State of humbled Sinners, who are not to regard what Nature requires, but what Repentance demands, which is soliciting for the Pardon of past Offences.

And because true Repentance, looking at the foulness of Sin, sees it to deserve Punishment, hence, O God, may it be the Effect of thy Grace in us on this Day, above others, to espouse the Cause of Justice, and undertake the Punishment of Sin.

Upon this Consideration, may it be our Practice to bear with Patience whatever Affliction comes from thy Heavenly Hand ; may we receive it with Humility, Submission and Silence, as the Effect of thy Justice, and what is due to our Sins ; and hence, O God, may no Word of Impatience this Day be heard from us. R. *Grant this, O God of Mercy.*

Upon the same Motive, may we bear with Patience whatever Provocation is given us by our Neighbour, whether by any Injury, Affront or Ill Humour ; may we take it all with Humility, Submission and Silence, as the Effect of thy Justice, and as due to our Sin ; and hence, O God, may

may no Word of Passion, Quarrelling or Impatience, this Day, be heard from us. R. *Grant this, O God of Mercy.*

Upon the same Motive, whatever happen to us, which we apprehend as a Lessening to us, as a Contempt or Reproach, may we take it with Humility, Submission and Silence, as the Effect of thy Justice, and as due to our Sins; and hence, O God, may no Word of Impatience or Complaint be this Day heard from us. R. *Grant this, O God of Mercy.*

Upon the same Motive, may we join with Justice in our Endeavours of punishing Sin in ourselves, by such Self-denials as Prudence shall direct; in punishing our Appetite, because in that we have offended; and therefore obliging it to such an Abstinence, both as to Meat and Drink, as may be uneasy to it; in punishing our Tongue, because in that we have offended; and therefore putting it under such a Restraint of Silence, as may be uneasy to it; in punishing our Pride, because in that we have offended; by making it stoop to such Humiliations, as shall be uneasy to it. In punishing our Sloth, because in that we have offended; and therefore obliging ourselves to such Exercises, both in Rising, Praying, Recollection, Reading, Working, Visiting Poor and Rich, as may be uneasy to us; in these, and whatever other
Ways

Ways may be proper, ever submitting with Humility and Patience, as to Punishments due to our Sins. R. *Grant this, O God of Mercy.*

Grant, O God, that this may be our Method on this Day; may thy Grace both direct and strengthen us in it: And if Nature be uneasy, help us, we beseech thee, in overcoming it, and forcing it to yield to what is Just; help us in gaining this Victory, that having been so Blind and Miserable, as to yield to Nature in the Ways of Sin, we may now be so happy as to oblige Nature to yield to Justice in the Punishment of it.

As long as Nature struggles, may we still continue our Endeavours for making it comply. May we put it in Mind, that it is Just its Rebellion should be punish'd: That by Punishment it is to be made afraid of Sin, which costs it so dear: That by the Exercises of Penance it may move God to Mercy, and prevent that other Punishment of his Justice, which is Eternal; that having lifted itself up against its God, 'tis fit it should be humbled, and now feel the Smart of its Wickedness.

But above all, O God, to carry on this Work of Penance with Success, may we on this Day ascend in Spirit to *Mount Calvary*, and see the Pattern there set before us.

May

May we for one Day at least live by that Copy, which ought to be our Rule all our Lives.

May we from him see how to be silent amidst Reproaches and Contempt, how to be Patient under the Weight of Troubles, how to conform our Will to thine, O God, in the Midst of the greatest Desolation. May we from him learn a Crucified Life under an Universal Contradiction to Nature; not in Things Inconsiderable, but in the Extremities of a general Anguish. May we from his wounded and torn Flesh learn what is the Punishment due to Sin; and having an Assurance from his Apostle that he suffer'd, leaving us an Example that we may follow his Steps; having Christ himself calling upon us to deny ourselves, and take up our Cross and follow him, may we then every one turn to ourselves and ask,

Is Christ alone to suffer on the Cross; and am I to have no Part in it, tho' he calls me to it, and commands me to follow him?

Am I the Offender to go unpunish'd, while the Spotless Lamb suffers, and tells me he suffers for my Example?

Am I to follow Nature still, which has led me into Sin; and depart from Christ, who by Suffering teaches me how to cancel Sin?

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Am I to think it difficult to embrace the Self-denial, which Christ commands; when by such Contradiction I may partake in the Suffering of Christ, and escape the Everlasting Suffering, which is due to my Sins?

Have I follow'd Nature to sin; and shall I not follow Christ in the Remedy of Sin?

O my Jesus, my Redeemer, I desire to do it; I desire to take thee for my Light and my Guide, and I beg thy Grace, that, as far as belongs to me, I may ever follow thy Steps. This, O God, may I do all my Life, according to the Example thou hast given me in all thine. But since on this Day thou wast pleas'd to give thy Life on the Cross for the Redemption of Sin, give me Grace this Day particularly to study the Cross; to see in what Particulars, I can take up mine; to see in what Particulars I can make a Sacrifice of my own Will, and by uniting it with thine, find Acceptance with the Father; for on the Day of so great a Sacrifice, 'tis Just all thy Followers should mourn for the terrible Effects, which Sin has upon thy Sacred Person, and not let this Day pass without some Offering of a Contrite Heart, which may be on their Parts a Sacrifice for Sin. Grant this, O Blessed Jesus, that I may so observe the Day of our Redemption, as to partake
of

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of the Redemption thou hast wrought for me. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

LOrd Jesus Christ, who didst descend from the Bosom of thy Father upon Earth, and shed thy Precious Blood for the Remission of our Sins ; we humbly beseech thee; that in the Day of Judgment being placed at thy Right Hand, we may hear those Words, *Come you Blessed* ; who Livest and Reignest with God the Father.

Our Lady on Saturday.

THis being a Day, on which the Church calls us to a particular Memorial of the Blessed Virgin ; let us this Day raise up our Thoughts to God, and give Thanks for his Eminent Graces, by which she was privileg'd above all Women, and beg that her Example of Sanctity may be to us the Instruction of our Lives.

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Let us pray.

TO thee, O Eternal God, we render our most Humble Thanks for those many Privileges of Grace, by which thou hast eminently distinguish'd the Blessed Virgin, and manifested her to the whole World to be the Choice of Heaven.

'Tis what obliges us to exalt thy Glory, O God, upon Earth, to see in our Corruptible and Mortal Flesh a Soul so above the Corruption of our Nature, as to be declar'd by a Testimony from Heaven to be *full of Grace* even upon Earth; and to be so sanctified by thy Gifts, that thy only Son, the Eternal Word, should take Flesh of her, and become Man, and she truly become the Mother of her Lord.

For these thy Prerogatives to her, O Eternal Father, we bless and adore thy Holy Name, and publish to the whole World that thou art worthy of Praise, and Glory, and Benediction, for thus manifesting thy Gifts, and by the Wonders of thy Power and Goodness raising up our dull Souls to magnify thy Mercies, and confess that thou art our God.

Blessed therefore be thou, O God, for all the Wonders of thy Goodness in the
Blessed

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Blessed Virgin, and in particular for that Eminent Sanctity of her Life, by which she is become a Light and Example to us in the Way of Salvation, and teaches us both what we have to ask of thee, for the help of our Corruption; and how we are to live, for the coming to the Possession of thy Glory. Let it be thy Blessing to us this Day, O God, that we may learn something of what she teaches, so, with her, to make our Approaches to thee.

The First Petition we make on this Account is, that as the Blessed Virgin was *full of Grace*, so thou would'st vouchsafe, O God, to grant that thy Grace may abide in us also; that our Hearts may be prepar'd to receive this Divine Gift; and not only to receive it, but likewise to be in that good Disposition, as to continue in the lasting Possession of it.

For this End, we beseech thee, O Father of Mercy, to purify our Hearts from all sinful Affection, and to take from us all that Corruption, which defiles our Souls, and renders them incapable of thy Grace. Let nothing abide in us, O God, which is displeasing to thee: Let neither the Love of the World, nor the Love of Interest, nor the Love of any Creature, nor any kind of Passion so prevail in us, as to
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Our Lady on Saturday. 499

exclude thy Grace from our Hearts :
And if there be any Thing of this Disorder in us, we implore thy Mercy to remove it.

For if we Honour and Admire the Blessed Virgin for being *full of Grace* ; and then turning our Eyes upon our own Breasts, see plainly that we are full of the World, full of Self-love, full of Sin, and that thy Grace, O God, cannot likely have any Place in us, how unhappy must we be ! How little Comfort can we have in the Solemnities of thy Saints, whose remarkable Exemplarity must be a Reproach of our Careless and Faithless State, and the Condemnation of our Crimes ! Hear therefore our Prayer, we beseech thee, and grant that as the Blessed Virgin was full of Grace, so we also may be sanctified by some Portion of it.

A Second Petition we make, that as we have an Assurance by the Mouth of the Angel that thou, O Lord, wast with her ; so thou would'st vouchsafe to be with us also ; to abide with us, to enlighten us, to direct us, to heal us, to comfort us, to strengthen us, and to carry us through all the Difficulties of this Life till we come to a better.

This, O God, we ask of thee, because of the great Unhappiness of our Temper, which is ever eager in the Desire of worldly

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500 *Our Lady on Saturday.*

ly Things, and always thinks those happy, who are in the Possession of them. Hence, O God, how distracted are we in our Desires; sometimes bent upon Trifles, sometimes upon what is Vain, sometimes upon what is Worldly, sometimes upon what is Sinful, and imagining Comfort to be in whatever is the Object of our Inclinations.

Thus our Nature leads, and deceives us with the Proposal of imaginary Happiness: But now, O God, we confess there is no solid Comfort but in thee alone, and therefore we most earnestly beg thee to be ever with us: All Earthly Things are Vain, False and Deceitful; and whatever we possess of them, they cannot make us Happy; and therefore we confess the more we confide and rest in them; the more we must expect to be deceiv'd. But thou, O Lord, art that Infinite and Only Good which cannot fail, which alone canst be our Present and Future Happiness: Be thou therefore, O God, be thou with us.

Be thou with us in all the Circumstances of our Lives; in our Prayers, in our Business, in our Recreations, at our Table, our Conversation, in our Troubles, in our Weakness, in Time of Temptation and Danger, in Health and Sickness, and above all, O God, be with us at the Hour of
our



our Death. Grant, we beseech thee, that before all Things we may desire this ; that resting and placing our Hope in thee, we may in thee find Comfort, Protection and Security, and under this Confidence fear nothing, that the Devil or World can do against us.

Be thus with us, O God, in this Life.

For thus only, O God, can we hope to be with thee in the next.

A Third Petition we make to thee, that as the Blessed Virgin *laid up and ponder'd in her Heart* whatever Things she heard of Christ, and of thy Mercies, in the great Work of our Redemption ; so we also may learn this Practice, of laying up and keeping in our Hearts the Remembrance of thy Mercies, and those great Duties which our Blessed Redeemer has taught us ; for living thy Servants, and working out our Salvation.

Hear us, O God, we beseech thee, in this Point ; for we confess here a great Weakness, a great Inconstancy and Lightness of our Nature : Who, tho' we profess a Faith of all thou teachest, seem to fear thy Judgments upon our Sins, and to desire thy Mercies ; tho' we read and hear what belongs to our Duties ; tho' we are often mov'd, purpose, and make Resolutions, yet behold, O God, such is our Misery, nothing of this sticks by us ; the
next

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next Trifle carries away our Thoughts, Business or Trouble, or (in want of these) Impertinencies and Follies take up our Hearts; and we no sooner turn away our Eyes from thee, but presently we forget thee, and all that belongs to our Salvation.

This unhappy Temper requires thy Help, O God; wherefore we most humbly beseech thee to have Compassion on us, and by thy Grace to confirm us against this Effect of our Inconstancy. And since the Order of thy Mercies requires our Endeavours, grant we may use such Means on our Part, as may be proper for obtaining what we ask.

Grant we may learn in the School of the Blessed Virgin, and from this Mistress of Meditation be taught to meditate on the Life and Gospel of Jesus: May we make our Hearts a Treasure of his Divine Instructions, and come to the Practice of frequently comparing our Lives with what he has taught us.

Help us, O God, in making this one Part of our daily Exercise! And on those Days, which thou hast set apart for thy Service, then, O God, may we remember that the Work of Eternity calls for our Thoughts and our Time, and therefore set some Time apart for conferring in our Hearts, and making a more particular

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cular Enquiry into the State of our Soul. Then, O Blessed Lord, may we consider the Rules of the Gospel, and by reflecting on the Methods of our Lives, take some Measures of what is to be encouraged, what is to be chang'd, what to be amended in us. And this, O God, may we not slightly think over, but carry on so far, as to come to the Execution of what we propose. In this manner may we lay up and ponder in our Hearts, as the Holy Virgin did, in hopes of coming at length to some resemblance of her Holy Life.

And now, O God, give us leave to conclude our Petitions of this Day with this Prayer, that we may ever labour to follow the Directions given by our Blessed Lady, at the Marriage-Feast of *Cana of Galilee* of *doing whatever Christ shall say to us*: This was her Advice to the Servants; and in following it they found the Effects of his Power in a miraculous Supply of their Wants.

Thus, O God, may we do: Give us Grace at all times to consider what Christ says to us, whatever is his Holy Will and Command: And whatever we find in ourselves, or in others, contrary to this, may it be our constant Practice with Resolution to stand against it; declaring at all Times that we can have no Hopes, either
in

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in the Power or Merits of Christ, but by endeavouring to be faithful in the Observance of his Commands. Lead us, O Merciful God, ever on in this Way, and may our Fidelity accompany the Expectation we have in his Mercies.

And you, O Blessed Virgin, who know the Infirmities of our Nature, and Difficulties of a Christian Life, exercise your Charity in our Behalf; and pray before the Thorne of God, that we may walk in the Way of his Commandments, and be Faithful Followers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to whom be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

GRant, we beseech thee, O Lord, our God, that we thy Servants may enjoy a perpetual Health, both of Mind and Body, and by the Glorious Intercession of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, being deliver'd from present Evils, may be brought to the Possession of eternal Joys. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son.

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